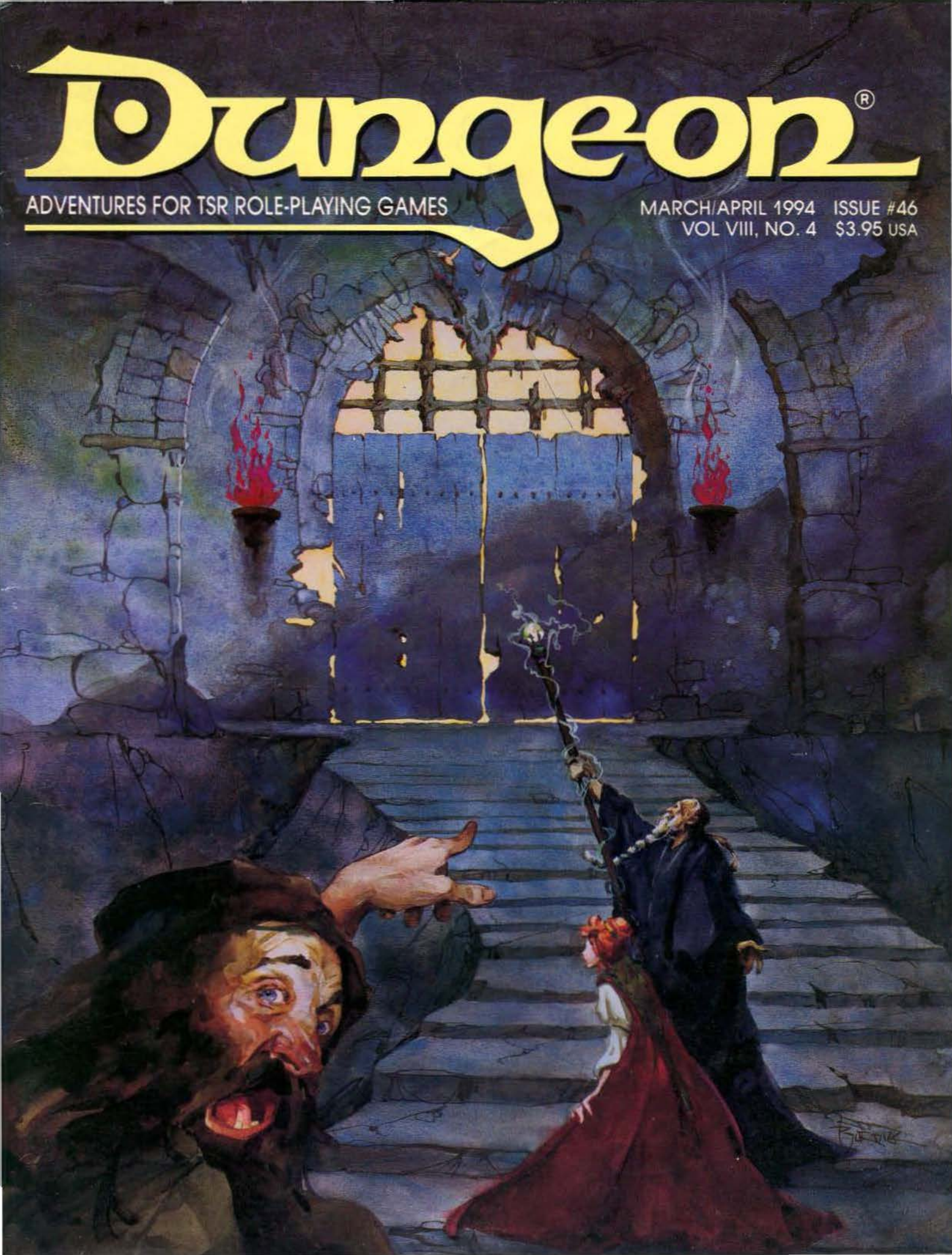
Dungeon®

ADVENTURES FOR TSR ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

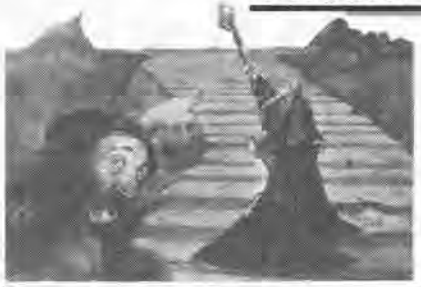
MARCH/APRIL 1994 ISSUE #46
VOL VIII, NO. 4 $3.95 USA



Dungeon®

ADVENTURES FOR TSR ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

MARCH/APRIL 1994 ISSUE #46



COVER: Deep in an ancient underground fortress, adventurers approach a magical portal to the Underdark. Scott Burdick paints this interlude in the search for "The Iron Orb of the Duergar."

Trite and True

This week, I received a letter from one of our readers who is serving with the U.S. Army in Germany. Thomas J. Broadfoot points out that some of our published adventures seem inconsistent with the "Ideas to Avoid" section of our module guidelines.

"I am amazed to find adventures that go against what your guidelines say to avoid," Thomas writes. He goes on to cite "Ransom" (rescue a kidnapped child; issue #42); "Isle of the Abbey" (fight an evil cleric and his undead legions; issue #34); and "The Siege of Kratys Freehold" (orc invasion; issue #33). Thomas adds, "It seems to me that all of the adventure themes I mentioned are ones that are listed as not acceptable. So what gives?"

I've heard it said that all fiction (and adventure modules *are* a form of fiction) is variation on a dozen or so basic themes. So, if there's nothing really new under the sun, how do we produce a magazine containing adventures that are fun to read and enjoyable to play?

One way is to encourage new writers to submit adventures. Our module guidelines are designed to help the person who has never submitted anything to us before. We want you to have the best chance of submitting an adventure proposal that strikes a chord, tickles our fancy, rings our bells (and all those other trite phrases, which have their uses in the proper place). One way for a new author to do this is to write something out of the ordinary. If today's mail brings half a dozen orc infestations and one old man plagued by singing mushrooms, which one do you think has the best chance of publication?

Our guidelines don't say that we'll never publish another module featuring an orc raid, a kidnapped princess, or an evil wizard. Guidelines are meant to guide, not lead around by the nose. If you're a new writer (new to us, that is), your chances are greatly improved if you send us an imaginative proposal that avoids the standard plots of fantasy literature and gaming adventures. If you can take well-used concepts and turn them into something new and different, feel free to prove us wrong.

Barbara G. Young

Vol. VIII, No. 4

PUBLISHER: TSR, Inc.
ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER: Brian Thomsen
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: Kim Mohan
EDITOR: Barbara G. Young
ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Wolfgang H. Baur

Printed in U.S.A.

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT: Dale A. Donovan
ART DIRECTOR: Larry W. Smith
CARTOGRAPHER: Diesel
TYPESETTING: Tracey Isler
SUBSCRIPTIONS: Janet L. Winters
ADVERTISING: Cindy Rick

The Readers — LETTERS 6

Ted James, Thomas Zuvich — DOVEDALE
(D&D® adventure, levels 1-3)
The river is running dry, the harvest is threatened, and the fish are unhappy. 8

Steve Kurtz — FLOATING ROCK
(AD&D® adventure, levels 5-9)
Meet the strangest band of pirates on the seas. Meet their ship, too. . 24

Randy Maxwell — GOBLIN FEVER
(AD&D adventure, levels 3-5)
Snipers, food shortages, fires, and mayhem. The city of Waen Fawr has a bad case of the fever. 28

Peter Åberg — THE IRON ORB OF THE DUERGAR
(AD&D adventure, levels 11-15)
The Northmen are on a rampage, and only the duergar know why. Discover the secret of the iron orb. 50

From the wrath of the Northmen, O Lord, deliver us.
Unknown Frankish monk

LETTERS

Please let us know what you think about this issue of DUNGEON® Adventures. Although we can't print every letter we receive, we read them all and seriously consider your comments and suggestions. Write to: Letters, DUNGEON Adventures, P.O. Box 111, Lake Geneva WI 53147 USA.

Email to tsr.mags@genie.geis.com.

Lights! Camera! Action!

After recently resubscribing to DUNGEON® Adventures, I read Matt Mulcahy's and Mark Krzeminski's letters in issue #44. I think I can give both a little advice, because I've encountered similar problems.

First off, Matt has to realize that most stupid people do not play role-playing games (too many brain cells tied up at once with the dice, miniatures and all). What Matt cannot identify is what motivates his players. If he learned that, he could manipulate his players! Just because players don't follow the written plot doesn't mean they're stupid. Matt's distress comes from the conflict between what he would like to have happen and what the players are making happen.

My own example comes from the pages of DUNGEON Adventures #13, "The Moor-Tomb Map." I wanted to use the town as a base setting for a larger combination of adventures, and while I used the map as the story hook, I wanted to expand the role of the bandits. My goal was for the PCs to become the rescuers of Moorwall, local heroes.

My own noble pursuits were immediately at odds with the players'. The PCs were there for the money. Instead of burying the bodies in encounter 2, they looted them to make sure the bandits hadn't missed anything! When the bandits ambushed the PCs on their way out of the tomb with the treasure, instead of dumping the loot, escaping, and waiting to jump the bandits at a better place and time, they fought on the beaches of the lake and several PCs died. When the bandits attacked Moorwall, the PCs thought it would be a fantastic opportunity to backtrack to the bandits' hideout and loot it while the bad guys were busy burning the town to the ground!

In other words, the Knights of the Round Table were really the Dirty Dozen, and I was forced to put on my sunglasses and drawl, "What we have here is a failure to communicate." I had forgotten the carrot and the stick philosophy to better DMing. I wanted rescuers getting free ale for the rest of their lives in a grateful little town. What I got were a few survivors rejoicing that they didn't have to split the treasure with their fallen comrades! Their biggest worry was where they were going to spend their money, now that the town was leveled.

My advice to Matt is to find out what motivates his PCs. If they're after money, use that as a hook and keep it in front of them like a carrot. If the PCs tend to wander off on their own all the time, make nasty things happen to them. After a while, they'll realize the world is a dangerous place and life is better if they stay with the group. Keeping them motivated makes them want to go down the paths you'd like, and you don't have to use the stick as often.

This comes back to Mark's letter. Mark, a DM is like a movie director. You control the cameras that let the players see your world. You have close-ups, wide-angle shots, and focus shots. Sometimes the soundtrack will let the players hear events going on around them that they cannot see. You control the whole thing. If all movies were filmed in wide-angle shots, lacking any detail, nobody would go to the movies.

If your PCs like your dungeons, you must have good "focus shots" that provide detail. You don't let the PCs wander all over a dungeon, do you? The confines of the story keep them channeled. The same applies to forests and cities. Keep your "cameras" focused, lead the PCs where you will, and let the "soundtrack" remind them that they're in a much larger place with events going on all around them. Let the PCs wander right where you want them to!

To both Mark and Matt, the key to manipulation is getting other people to act on your ideas, making them think they're their own ideas. They have fun, the illusion of free choice, and you get what you want. Decide on your desired outcome before beginning, and make sure you keep that end in mind. Players get trained after a while to wait for clues, but keep up the details so that nobody gets bored.

As a final note, Dougal and Radcliffe (from "The Moor-Tomb Map") successfully conquered the outlying lands, and one day annexed the castle that the PCs had so painstakingly built with their fabulous wealth. As DM, I had a lot of fun doing that, and the PCs learned that bandits are easier to kill at 3rd level than at 10th level. In the AD&D® world, there is no such thing as financial security.

Chris Champagne
No Address Given

Buried in a plot

A small thread of letters has appeared through the last three issues of DUNGEON Adventures. The general

DUNGEON® (ISSN 0890-7102) is published bimonthly by TSR, Inc., 201 Sheridan Springs Road, Lake Geneva WI 53147 U.S.A. The mailing address for all material **except** subscription orders is DUNGEON®, P.O. Box 111, Lake Geneva WI 53147 U.S.A.; telephone (414) 248-3625; fax (414) 248-0389.

Distribution: DUNGEON is available from game and hobby shops throughout the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom, and through a limited number of other overseas outlets. Distribution to the book trade in the United States is by Random House, Inc., and in Canada by Random House of Canada, Ltd. Distributed to the book trade in the United Kingdom is by TSR Ltd. Send orders to: Random House, Inc., Order Entry Department, Westminster MD 21157, U.S.A.; telephone: (800) 733-3000.

Subscriptions: Subscription rates via second class mail are as follows: $18 in U.S. funds for six issues sent to an address in the U.S., $23 in U.S. funds for delivery to Canada, $35 in U.S. funds for surface mail delivery to any other address, and $52 in U.S. funds for air mail delivery to any other address. Prices are subject to change without notice. Payment in full must accompany all subscription orders. Payment should be by check or money order, made payable to TSR, Inc., or by charges to valid MasterCard or VISA credit cards. Send subscription orders with payments to: TSR, Inc., P.O. Box 5695, Boston MA 02206. The issue of expiration of each subscription is printed on the mailing label for each subscriber's copy of the magazine. Changes of address for the delivery of subscription copies must be received at least six weeks prior to the effective date of the change, in order to assure uninterrupted delivery.

Back issues: Limited back issues of this magazine are available from the TSR Mail Order Hobby Shop, P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A. For a copy of the current mail-order catalog, write to the above address.

Submissions: All material published in DUNGEON becomes the exclusive property of the publisher, unless special arrangements to the contrary are made prior to publication. DUNGEON welcomes unsolicited submissions of written material and artwork; however, no responsibility for such submissions can be assumed by the publisher in any event. Any submission accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope of sufficient size will be returned if it cannot be published. Please write for our writers' guidelines before sending a module to us; send a self-addressed, stamped envelope (9½" long preferred) to: Module Guidelines, DUNGEON, TSR, Inc., P.O. Box 111, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A.

Advertising: For information on placing advertisements in DUNGEON, ask for our rate card. Contact: Advertising Coordinator, TSR, Inc. P.O. Box 756, 201 Sheridan Springs Road, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A.

DUNGEON is a registered trademark for the TSR role-playing adventure periodical published by TSR, Inc. All rights to the contents of this publication are reserved, and nothing may be reproduced from it in whole or in part, without first obtaining written permission from the publisher.

® designates registered trademarks owned by TSR, Inc. ™ designates trademarks owned by TSR, Inc. Most other product names are trademarks owned by the companies publishing those products. Use of the name of any product without mention of trademark status should not be construed as a challenge to such status.

©1994 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Printed in the U.S.A.

Second-class postage paid at Lake Geneva, Wis., U.S.A. and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to DUNGEON, c/o TSR, Inc., P.O. Box 111, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A.

theme of this thread deals with the inclusion of plot in modules. This started in issue #41 with Adam C. Chunn advocating more modules that lack a solid plot. Issues #42 and #43, respectively, contained letters by Gary Lai and Paul F. Culotta arguing to the contrary. I shall continue this by supporting Mr. Chunn's position.

Mr. Chunn's letter could be loosely summarized as saying, "Please include modules that are more heavily detailed in terms of setting than in terms of plot." And I am asking the same. I am not asking to get rid of plot-filled modules; they have their place as do setting-filled modules.

Both Mr. Lai and Mr. Culotta stated that a DM has only to remove the plot from an adventure to get what Mr. Chunn needs. I disagree. In most plot-driven adventures, the setting is developed in such as way as to best suit that plot. When this plot is removed, the setting becomes shallow and next to useless. The DM has to spend an inordinate amount of time developing the setting to make it useful, and would be better off starting from scratch.

Mr. Lai and Mr. Culotta, each in his own way, argued that non-plot adventures are easy to design. I agree that plotless adventures are easy to create. But I am not really interested in plotless adventures (and I feel that Mr. Chunn is not interested in them, either). What we want are detailed settings to help our own campaigns and place our own plots in. I personally feel it is more difficult to create a believable, viable, living setting—one that can exist and function on its own, without the crutch of a specific plot. (As a side note, this may also address part of Chris Roberts' problem of linear story lines; see issue #43. With a full, living setting, the DM would find it easier to have multiple or non-linear story lines.)

Finally, Mr. Lai and Mr. Culotta stated that the purpose of DUNGEON Magazine is to provide quality plot-filled adventures. I would like to expand that definition. I feel that DUNGEON Magazine should provide quality tools for the DM. Tools that can intellectually stimulate both players and DMs. Tools that help save the DM's time and energy, allowing the DM to host a quality game-playing session. Tools that include thought-provoking, plot-filled adventures and inspired living, detailed settings.

Modules of setting have a place in DUNGEON Magazine. These modules would be much more than just maps, encounters, and caches of loot. They could include local histories, broad NPC descriptions, and motives, local geographical descriptions, etc. In essence, POLYHEDRON® Newszine already does this with the "Living City." DUNGEON Magazine could also do this, allowing a wider variety of small but highly detailed settings.

Thomas L. Whitten
South Haven, Michigan

Where's Willie?

I have a few questions that I think need answering. First let me say that I've been reading your magazine since issue #28, which brings me to my first question. What happened to Willie Walsh? It seemed for a while he had an adventure in every issue, then all of a sudden nothing.

Second, why does it say "Adventures for TSR role-playing games" below the magazine name when you publish adventures for only two of TSR's games? Shouldn't it read "Adventures for the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game?"

Third, I recently purchased the AL-QADIM® boxed set and the book. Will DUNGEON Magazine ever publish adventures for this setting, or doesn't it get enough support?

Prescott Delke
No Address Given

We have several Willie Walsh adventures in inventory, and I know that one or two are still being written. I'm sure Willie will pop in here to let us know what he's been doing lately.

Our past experiments with publishing adventures for TSR's TOP SECRET® and MARVEL SUPER HEROES® games were not rousing successes. We might consider an AMAZING ENGINE™ adventure if we receive one that fits our general fantasy theme. We will definitely publish an AL-QADIM adventure soon.

Never Follow the Script

I am writing in response to letters in issue #44 from Matt Mulcahy and Mark Krzeminski. Matt writes that he doesn't know what to do with "stupid" players. Well, Matt, here are a few suggestions:

First, remember that they're not really stupid. In 15 years of playing D&D® and AD&D games, I've yet to meet a stupid person with enough interest to try the game. Your players are quite smart, they simply don't come up with the same solutions that you do, with your DM's omniscience.

Second, given that, decide what type of campaign you want to run, and run it. If you want a fast and loose, mostly fun campaign, silly mistakes and odd remarks should be allowed to the players. If you are running a more serious, high fantasy campaign, inform your players of that fact and then simply let them live with their mistakes. If a player announces his character's presence to a potential enemy, as the player in your letter did, he should experience the results in a direct and no-questions-asked manner. Smart people learn from their mistakes; stupid ones don't. *That* character may be dead, but the next one will be wiser.

Similarly, if players simply refuse to pick up on obvious clues, let them. The trick is to not be so focused on the adventure or module at hand that you feel it has to end where the designer intended. If they just don't get it, let them wander off into another story where they might do better. You'll be less frustrated and have a better time.

Third, and perhaps most important, switch roles. Let one of them be the DM for a while. Not only does reading or constructing a few modules and running them allow players to understand some of the conventions of the game (secret doors, cryptic notes, etc.), it gives them an empathy for the effort that you go through in order to run an adventure. In addition, this will give you a peek at the other side. Playing a character well and solving someone else's clues isn't as easy as we DMs sometimes think it is.

Finally, always remember that role-players are the most devious, contrary, and just plain frustrating set of people you could ever hope to meet. In my experience, if there is a way to do something completely the opposite of what the DM would imagine, they'll find it. Never expect them to follow the script closely, because they rarely will. Any adventure that forces them to perform certain actions not only removes the most interesting element of the game, but leeches most of the fun out, too.

Consequently, you as DM must be prepared to handle wacky alternatives that you would never have dreamed of.

Your reward should be knowing that you skillfully guided the players back on track without their ever suspecting that they were off of it. Remember, you are telling a story, so imagination is your biggest asset.

To Mark, I suggest two things to increase your powers of description. The first is to read everything that you can get your hands on. Read novels, travel articles, vacation brochures. Notice how the authors paint a picture with the use of only a few well-selected words. Read the section on description in the RAVENLOFT® boxed set. Nothing increases the ability to communicate and use language better than reading.

Second, describe things that you have seen, either in your life or in film. Descriptions of things that you have experienced offer the greatest ease of memory and the best "feel." Every haunted house that I have ever described in my games has been one of the houses that I grew up in. If I needed a large house, then when the players got to where my attic was, I just started with the basement of another house, mentally stacking one on top of the other. This is the oldest and best trick in the storyteller's arsenal: If it sounds like you've been there, it will feel like the players *are* there.

As for describing people, try describing three things about each person: one facial feature, one item of clothing, and something about their physical attitude. ("You are approached by a woman with deep-set, violet eyes. Her scarlet cloak swirls about her as she approaches, and you notice that, although she is unarmed, she moves like someone sizing up an opponent in the arena.") This formula usually is enough to let the players form their own mental image of the person they have seen or met, but remember, it's just a formula. Never be bound by formulas or rules within the confines of a role-playing game.

I hope that these suggestions will help you both in your games. Good luck.

Scott C. Nolan
Fairfax, Virginia

Disturbing Implications

I enjoyed Timothy Ide's "Train of Events" in the November/December issue but was disturbed by the implications. Like many DMs who use this magazine to insert adventures into an ongoing campaign, I find a module involving steam engine technology to be logistical suicide. That is tantamount to saying that those dwarves are standing right there on the edge of the Industrial Revolution. That is saying a lot.

The *Dungeon Master's Guide* has a table showing what items are available or unavailable to adventurers within the temporal/historical framework of a particular campaign. The latest time period shown is the Renaissance, which is as it should be, and yet the railroad adventure puts a nineteenth-century spin on things. There would be nothing to confine the technology to that mountain range, and nothing to stop an evil archmage who learns of all of this from marching in with an army of humanoids (armed with arquebuses, no doubt) and wresting the technology from unwilling dwarven hands.

As associate editor of a magazine dealing with fantasy fiction, and as an author who writes it, I feel constrained to respect the expectations of readers and keep unnecessary anachronisms and inconsistencies to a minimum. I let my group create a special set of characters specifically to run through that adventure, so that I would not have to worry about the technological repercussions for my own carefully developed campaign world. While I enjoyed this one-shot adventure and liked Mr. Ide's concept, I probably would not appreciate similar anachronisms in future adventures. What's next? Lasers?

Tim Scott
Chicago, Illinois

The True Spirit

I took great exception to the letter by "The Rez" [issue #45], in which he asserted that there are three levels of players: those who enjoy combat, those who are facile at combat, and those who enjoy role-playing. To me, this is entirely incorrect and represents everything that is wrong with the "new school" of gamers. In fact, there are three *elements* of gaming: combat, role-playing, and problem solving (the last being too much ignored these days).

Quite often a gamer meets people who tell with a pompous air how they have "gone beyond mere hack and slash" gaming and are now brilliant role-players. I tried putting a group of these clowns into an old 1st edition module and they died quickly. Almost every "classic" 1st edition module was designed so that players could not "merely hack and slash," because the monsters were too powerful to just walk in and kill. The characters had to think a great deal to survive, but these guys were not used to thinking.

Today at tournaments they only grade role-playing. After all, the adventures have become such that you would have to be an idiot not to figure out the mysteries, and a fool not to survive the combat. Instead, you are led by the hand along some predictable and convoluted plot, so you have nothing else to do but role-play to your heart's content. Thankfully, there are enough good modules (and quite a few good DUNGEON adventures) that are actually challenging enough to sustain the people that this game was invented for.

I would say that, if you play with a group where 1) you never actually had a character die, 2) you never had to sit for more than an hour making plans or solving puzzles, 3) you were never forced to retreat, 4) your DM ignores the rules that make your life harder, such as item saves for things you carry and for treasure you hit with spells; weapon speeds; declaration of intent; casting times and material components, then you are probably playing with a group that does not exemplify the true spirit of the AD&D game.

John Nowakowski
Las Vegas, Nevada

PC Jewels

After reading Matt Mulcahy's letter (DUNGEON #44), I wondered why it was ever published. Three possibilities came to mind: 1. As a warning to his players (commendable but a bit public and harsh). 2. As a lesson on bloated ego and condescension to other DMs. 3. The editors would prefer the gaming community to respond instead of sounding off themselves.

There is but one generalization I stand by after 13 years of DMing a campaign that, for varied periods, has included 63 players from different cultural, social, and economic backgrounds: Anyone who shows up for their second session is worth developing, and is certainly not stupid. Stupid people never come back.

It appears that Mr. Mulcahy has forgotten the primary rule of good gaming, that "the play's the thing." It is understood, at conventions and tourna-

ments, that a DM is primarily a judge, with all the restrictions that one-shot competitive gaming entails. An ongoing campaign, however, greatly enlarges the DM's role and allows considerably more latitude in handling gaming situations. Furthermore, a campaign with inexperienced or first-time players moves the DM's already varied roles (author, actor, psychoanalyst, etc.) into the realm of purveyor of near-mystical experience. Those first sessions are the rites of passage into our hobby, when the whole thing is alien and fantastic, before gamespeak and chronic accounting set in. The DM has an obligation to stretch himself for those first-timers, not write denigrating letters about them.

Look closely at the situations Mr. Mulcahy complains about. His bard pulls a Kermit the Frog entrance into a lair of hallucinating humanoids. I can count on one hand the number of times a role-playing hook that incredible jumped into my lap. Forget the instructions that say the party shouldn't enter the lair at "fix" times. The DM should react to opportunity and wing it, which is the true challenge and joy of DMing.

Earlier, this same bard had become enamored with a book of bad poetry (this PC is a jewel) owned by a halfwit gnome archaeologist. Any DM who can't get a memorable session (or three) out of that relationship and teach young spell-casters the value of divination spells should find a different hobby. It makes no sense to criticize players for behaving humorously (intentionally or not) in silly adventures—or in extremely grave situations, as most heroic literature is filled with comic relief.

Mr. Mulcahy asks for advice:

1. Play with people whose company you enjoy and whom you respect.

2. When DMing an inexperienced party, run an NPC for direct input. I use halfling thieves, as they are less likely to be completely trusted, can disappear and reappear believably, make timely saves when necessary, and lead the party into situations that serve the plotline. Specific-mythoi priests who can't turn undead and have obtuse goals are a good second choice, though they can easily end up as crutches unless their temples are kept at great distances.

3. Leave yourself an exit from a dead-end adventure. I always keep a complex encounter stashed that will lead the party into an entirely different adventure. That way, if my ranger/druid decides not to help that beached whale, the session can head in a different direction without a huge lull. Later, I can determine the repercussions of his inaction.

4. Apologize to your players, and remember that this hobby of ours is for fun. We all compete constantly just to maintain our lives. Fantasy role-playing offers us a chance to be more or less than ourselves.

If you use this letter, please print my full address. If that bard is ever in Paris, I'd like a chance to play with him.

Emett H. Barfield III
38 rue Marx Dormoy
75018 Paris, France

Magic Overdose

As a subscriber to your magazine, I felt I should drop a line or two to give my opinion on a few things.

First of all, your magazine is a huge time-saver for me, since I rarely have the time, determination, or inspiration to write a module half as good as the ones you publish. Not only that, but the quality of your publication, both aesthetically (I don't know who makes those maps, but he/she does a great job of it) and substantially, is excellent. [*Almost all our maps are drawn by Diesel, our staff cartographer.*]

Another thing I would like to point out is the abundance of written props in your adventures. I should remind DMs and editors alike that not everyone in the AD&D world can read or write. [*We figure that most mages can read, and a party without a mage is in trouble even without the complication of not being able to decipher written clues.*]

My last comment is one that concerns all of your writers and editors. I admit this may be a question of opinion, but I think there's an overdose of magic. I can only suppose all writers are familiar with the second edition rules on creating magical items, and know it's not something you do on a whim. It takes an 11th-level spell-caster to create a magical item, and I'm sure there aren't hordes of those (remember, that's 375,000 XP). Heck, I admit that magic may be fairly common in fantasy worlds such as these, but a magical item is not something you can buy at the general store, or pick up at the town market. Even if it was, not many people have a few thousand gold pieces to buy a new sword. I'd like to see a more rational placement of magical items in future adventures. [*Check out Ted Zuvich's adventures in Volkrad, a low magic world, in issues 27, 33, 37, and 44.*]

Hey, are there any English-speaking gamers or clubs in the Paris area? I've been DMing a solo game for the last year or so, but it would be fun to have some more players (or even become one). I'll play any RPG. Please print my full address.

Edward Rostaing
20bis rue Henri-Martin
92100, Boulogne-Billancourt
France

Sense of Wonder

I am completely sick of seeing rules error quotes in the letters section of DUNGEON Magazine. I speak from experience when I say that nothing takes away the mystique of a gaming session faster than when someone says, "Excuse me, but according to the *Player's Handbook*, page . . ." That is so frustrating! I usually reply to those kind of observations with, "Yeah, so what's your point?" It is rarely the place of a player to dictate anything to a DM. If I want to have a 40', fire-breathing, telepathic, telekinetic, magic-resistant cockroach in my campaign, then I'm damn well entitled to it!

I'm so familiar with the game system that nothing anyone can do strictly by the rules holds my interest as a player for any length of time. I love it when a DM surprises me with a singing troll ("Song of the Fens," issue #40) or a dancing mushroom band ("Old Man Katan," issue #41).

I was prompted to write when I was angered by David A. Dwyer's correction of a certain magical effect in "Khamsa's Folly" [module in issue #40, letter in issue #43]. What are you thinking, David? The entire point of magic is for the players not to know exactly what's going on all the time. Who cares if there is no specific rule for the flinging of images across space and time by a powerful sorcerer? The rules are only guidelines for your own creativity, and if you can't see past them, you shouldn't be running a campaign.

Tim Goodness
2004 NE 85th Street
Vancouver WA 98665-9770

Ω

DOVEDALE

BY TED JAMES THOMAS ZUVICH

If the drought doesn't get you, the goblins will.

Artwork by Tony DiTerlizzi

Ted says: "I got the idea for this adventure while hiking near the real Dove Dale, in England's Derbyshire Dales District. I apologize for the liberties I have taken with the local geography and inhabitants."

"Dovedale" is a D&D® adventure for 2-3 player characters of levels 1-3, or one elven PC of levels 4-5, for a total of at least 4 levels. The adventure demands the use of stealth, so if there are multiple PCs, at least one of them should be a thief or a halfling. All the PCs should be either Lawful or Neutral.

"Dovedale" emphasizes role-playing, humor, and creative negotiating. This adventure is short and relatively simple to complete.

For the Player Characters

Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> The Dovedale district is one of the many small farming areas nestled in the foothills of a long mountain range. The district takes its name from the narrow wooded valley known as Dovedale. The like-named Dovedale River flows out of the dale and provides water for the many farms in the area. The Dalewold forest skirts the northwest edge of the valley.
>
> The farmers of the Dovedale district have a problem: It is midsummer, and the river has suddenly dried up. A small trickle of water remains, but not enough. Without water, most of the farmers' crops (which rely on irrigation) are doomed to fail. The locals are convinced that the abrupt drop in the river is yet another evil plot of a tribe of wicked goblins that live in the steep, winding dale. It's only a matter of time, they say, before the goblins issue a long string of unreasonable demands in return for restoring the river.
>
> The farmers spend much of their time standing around and grousing that someone should do something. However, none of the farmers have volunteered to go sort out the goblins. The local farmers' cooperative has offered a 100-gp reward to anyone brave enough to go up the Dovedale and force the goblins to restore the river. You have learned that interested parties should apply to Mrs. Cogs, the leader of the cooperative.

For the DUNGEON MASTER™

The farmers' complaints are partially correct; the goblins really are responsible for the river drying up. However, the inconvenience to the local farmers is merely a side effect of the goblins' scheme. The real reason why the goblins sabotaged the river has to do with the goblin chief's passion for fishing. For the last few years, Chief Gravelbeak has been trying to catch the trickiest fish in the Dovedale River: Salvel the Talking Trout. So far, the quick-witted Salvel has avoided capture.

Gravelbeak's continual failure to catch Salvel finally drove him to consider desperate measures. Gravelbeak (using impeccable goblin logic) reasoned that it would be easier to catch Salvel if the river did not have as much water in it. So the goblin chief and his misfit family laid their plans and captured the source of the river: Unda the River Fairy. Normally, Unda (a nixie) maintains the spring that is the source of the Dovedale River. When Unda was taken away, the spring dwindled and finally died out. The mighty Dovedale River quickly withered to a slow, anemic trickle.

Running the Adventure

If "Dovedale" is being used as a first-time adventure, the DM could give the PCs backgrounds as brave young persons from the surrounding area. The PCs could be inhabitants of the village of Ashbourne, or one of the PCs could be one of Mrs. Cogs's numerous children (see area 4). If the PCs have backgrounds as locals, each has heard 1-4 rumors associated with Dovedale (see sidebar, page 13). More than one PC may know the same rumor.

If the PCs are wanderers in search of adventure, start the adventure in Ashbourne. The phrasing of the introduction should lead the PCs to contact Mrs. Cogs, the leader of the farmer's cooperative. She will supply the PCs with some information that should spark the PCs' interest in talking to the locals about the Dovedale goblins. The PCs should spend some time talking to Ashbourne's citizens, asking the local sheep farmers about their experiences with the goblins, and inquiring at the Inn-on-the-Peak. Ferreting out these bits of information and scraps of old legends will provide an abundance of role-playing opportunities. PCs who skip this chance to gather information on their foes will regret their mistake.

The adventure begins in earnest once the PCs have finished gathering information and finally venture into goblin territory: the twisting canyon of the Dovedale itself. The PCs have a chance to gather additional information when they encounter Salvel the Talking Trout. PCs who rush right into the goblin lair will have difficulty completing the adventure.

Dovedale District

1. Ashbourne. Ashbourne is a small fortified farming village located about three miles southeast of Dovedale. Because of its proximity, Ashbourne is considered to be part of the Dovedale area. The Dovedale River flows past Ashbourne. The village has a farmer's market, a bakery, a dry goods store, a brewery, a church, several passable inns, and a couple of boarding houses. Some of the villagers may have old family armor and weapons for sale, but such items will cost at least twice the prices listed in the *Rules Cyclopedia* (pages 62 and 67).

The DM can use the description of any small village to flesh out Ashbourne. The village of Grinley Crossing, detailed in "Pearlman's Curiosity" (DUNGEON® Magazine #32), would serve admirably. In this case, "Dovedale" can be used as a logical precursor to "Pearlman's Curiosity."

The text below outlines two NPCs who live in Ashbourne. The DM should prepare several additional NPCs for the PCs to question while they are in Ashbourne, along with a listing of which rumors each NPC has heard. If the PCs ask around for information in Ashbourne, they can hear 1-4 rumors per day.

If the PCs spend more than a few hours in Ashbourne, a bum accosts them in the village square. The bum is Ian McNeill, the town drunk, who begs for money to buy a drink. If the PCs talk with Ian, he tells them about his encounters with Salvel the Talking Trout (see rumor #7). Ian hints to the PCs that he knows a great deal about the Dovedale goblins (he does not, but that will not stop him from making up a few stories), hoping to get them to buy him a drink. The inhabitants of Ashbourne rib Ian fiercely about his "speaking fish" stories.

Ian McNeill, town drunk: AC 10; HD 1−1 (M); hp 3; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; Save NM; ML 4; AL N; S 7, I 10, W 6, D 8, C 9, Ch 12; XP 10; dagger.

Ian's one great talent is his ability to make up whopping great fibs without forethought or preparation. His stories are sufficiently entertaining that the townsfolk provide him with enough money to maintain his self-destructive habit. Ian's widely renowned talent for making up stories is the main reason why nobody believes his tales about Salvel the Talking Trout.

Fionna of Ashbourne, Mayor: AC 10; HD 1 (M); hp 7; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; Save F1; ML 9; AL L; S 12, I 13, W 13, D 9, C 12, Ch 14; dagger, short sword, spear, long bow.

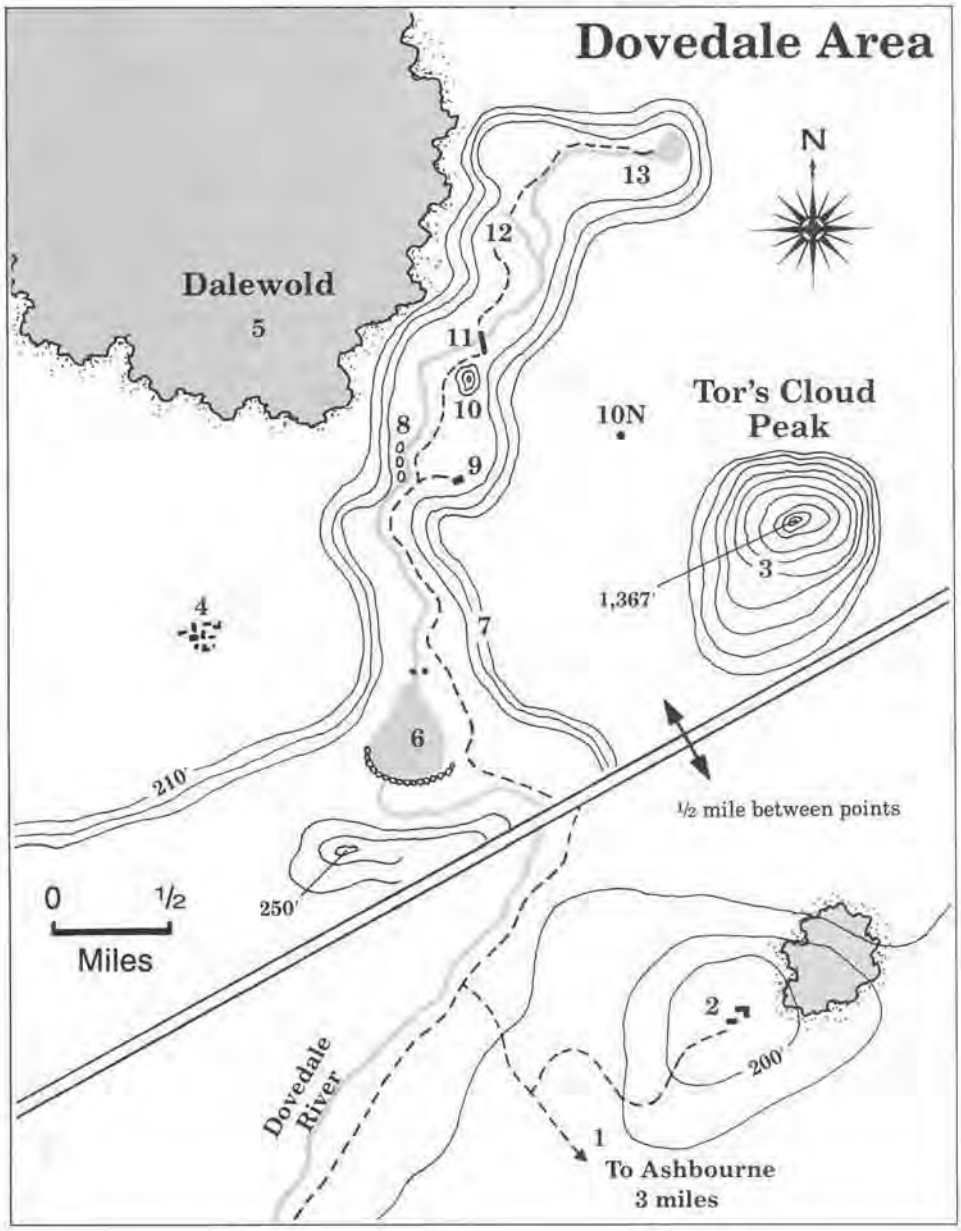
Mayor Fionna is a strong, dynamic, red-haired, 40-year-old woman who doesn't take lip from anybody. She is apt to thump troublemakers on the head first and sort out the details later. Besides being the mayor of Ashbourne, Fionna is an officer in the local militia. She can provide clear directions to Mrs. Cogs's farm, and the PCs will hear rumor #8 from her.

2. Inn-on-the-Peak. The Inn-on-the-Peak is a quaint country inn, catering primarily to the local sheepherders and farmers. The inn sits on the top of a small hill amid a small stand of oak trees. A narrow country lane bordered by 3'-tall stone walls winds its way through the trees to the top of the hill.

The Inn-on-the-Peak is famous for two things. The first is the rich, dark, musty-smelling beer that Hal the innkeeper brews in his cellar. This beer is known throughout the region as "Hal's Old Singular." Second, the inn's extensive rose gardens are reputed to be the most beautiful gardens for hundreds of miles. In the summer, the Inn-on-the-Peak attracts a number of rich visitors from Ashbourne, who come out to sample the rustic life, get pampered and well fed by Hal's excellent cook, and spend a few evenings walking in the inn's beautiful rose gardens.

But the rose gardens are suffering this summer. The inn's well is fed by the Dovedale River. Now that the river is dry, the well has also petered out.

The Inn-on-the-Peak has a total of 12 warm and comfortable rooms. At any time, 3-12 (1d10 +2) of the rooms are filled. A room rents for 10 sp per night (including meals). Each room is fitted



with two large beds with straw-stuffed mattresses and goose down comforters, a small hearth for a peat fire, a dresser, a mirror, a closet, a writing desk, and several comfortable chairs. Hot baths are available at an additional cost of 1 sp. Boarding for horses or similar mounts costs 4 sp per night.

The inn's large common room serves as a pub. A warm, fragrant peat fire heats the room. The pub has a low ceiling, which creates a dim interior where pale blue pipe smoke wafts among the hand-carved rafters. Anyone who stands taller than 5'6" had better learn to duck. Overstuffed wing-back chairs and couches are spread throughout the room, along with tables for chess, backgammon, and checkers. During the evening, 11-30 (1d20 + 10) locals gather in the common room.

The PCs can hear 1-4 of the rumors and legends about Dovedale per evening spent gossiping in the inn's pub. The pub patrons repeatedly mention the 100-gp reward in a pathetically transparent effort to encourage the PCs to explore the dale.

Old Man Krimble: AC 10; HD 1−1 (M); hp 4; MV 90'(30'); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; Save NM; ML 8; AL L; S 8, I 10, W 12, D 10, C 10, Ch 10; dagger.

Krimble is a stooped and weathered old graybeard, conversant with most of the lore about the local area. He is a regular feature in the inn's taproom. If the players are beginners and need a little prodding in the right direction, Krimble can suggest that the PCs interview some of the local farmers about the goblins. This will provide the PCs with the opportunity to learn more of the information contained in the "Rumors and Information" sidebar.

Hal the Innkeeper: AC 10; F2 (M); hp 10; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; Save F2; ML 9; AL L; S 12, I 11, W 11, D 9, C 13, Ch 14; short sword, club.

Hal is a thin, wiry, hard-working middle-aged man. He is an officer in the local militia and a well-respected businessman in the Dovedale area.

Shep, old sheep dog: AC 7; HD 1 (S); hp 7; MV 60'(20'); #AT 1 bite; Dmg 1-3; Save F1; ML 7; INT 4; AL N; CC/30 (Dog).

Shep is a retired sheep dog. He is very old and suffers from arthritis, so he moves quite slowly. He spends most of his time lying in front of the fire in the common room. From his position by the fire, Shep keeps up with local events and happenings.

If the PCs have a *speak with animals* spell, they can talk with Shep, who will relate the tale of how he and his fellow sheep dogs tangled with a pair of dire wolves that live in the Dalewold forest. Shep also knows that the goblin chief is named Gravelbeak, and that Stinkfoot is the only other goblin who can ride the dire wolves. At the DM's discretion, Shep may know a few further details. Anything that the PCs learn from Shep is in addition to the rumors related by the other patrons at the inn.

Years ago, Gravelbeak's great-grandfather bullied his family into building a secret tunnel leading into the Inn-on-the-Peak's beer cellar. It took the goblins several years to finish building the tunnel, but the result was worth it. The Dovedale goblins have been pinching beer from the cellar for generations now. They are very careful to control their greed; they steal only from kegs that are already open and take only a gallon or so at a time. The losses are barely noticeable, small enough that Hal would never think to mention them in casual conversation. Hal has attributed the losses to spillage, and perhaps

a little bit to the cook and the stable hands sneaking a few pints on the side, which he does not mind.

If the PCs ask Hal if they can search his cellar (perhaps after they find the beer kegs in the Goblin Beer Cellar, area 9), Hal will let them in. The PCs have normal chances to find the secret door, which is carefully blended into the brick wall behind one of the many wine racks in the cellar. The tunnel exit is hidden under a large stump in a copse of trees on the north side of the hill.

3. Tor's Cloud Peak. Tor's Cloud peak, elevation 1,370', serves as a local landmark. The peak is one mile northwest of the Inn-on-the-Peak. Dozens of sheep graze on the lower reaches of its grassy slopes. Tourists often climb to the summit during the warm summer months, dodging the sheep as they go. From the top of the peak, the view of the surrounding countryside is spectacular.

There is a 1-in-10 chance per day of a freak storm striking the top of Tor's Cloud. Roll 1d12 to determine the hour of the day when the storm strikes. Each storm lasts 1d6 + 1 turns. The storm delivers a deluge of hailstones, rain, and fiercely howling wind. Anyone caught in the storm takes 1-3 hp damage per turn. There is no shelter on the peak, and getting down to safety takes four turns. Someone with climbing skill can get off the peak in three turns.

If any of the PCs has danger sense skill or mountain survival skill (see *RC*, pages 83 and 85), the DM should secretly make a check before the PCs go up the mountain. If the skill check succeeds, and a storm is going to strike the peak that day, tell the player that his PC feels apprehensive about climbing the mountain.

4. Mrs. Cogs's Farm. Mrs. Cogs owns a large, prosperous farm on a hilltop to the west of Dovedale. She is a hard worker, an excellent cook (her pies always win blue ribbons at the annual fair), and the leader of the local farmers' cooperative. Her farm boasts a large house, several barns, many acres of grazing land, and several hundred sheep. Mrs. Cogs has six children, who help her run the farm: Ben (6), Bridgett (7), Kathy (10), Kevin (12), Parsival (16), and Petra (16).

Mrs. Cogs: AC 10; HD 1 – 1 (M); hp 6; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; Save NM; ML 9; AL L; S 9, I 9,

Rumors and Information

The PCs can hear the following rumors in the Dovedale area. In some cases, only a particular NPC will know the information, as noted below. Each NPC will repeat rumor #1 and also knows one other rumor from the list.

1. "A tribe of nasty goblins lives in the Dovedale. That's why everyone avoids the place. There are at least [30/50/90] of the monsters." (Partially true; there are only nine goblins.)
2. "If you find the goblin's chimney, you're right near their front door. I heard that from my grandpappy, who used to go play checkers with the goblin chief." (True. Old Man Krimble (area 2) makes this claim. He has told this story many times over the years. The other locals think he is merely bragging.)
3. "A good fairy maintains the Dovedale River. Without her, the river would cease to flow. She lives near a beautiful spring that's the source of the river." (True)
4. "The goblins have a secret lair in Dovedale." (True)
5. "Without water, our farms will wither and die. Without traffic on the river, Ashbourne will become much poorer, and the Inn-on-the-Peak will be unable to maintain its famous rose gardens." (True)
6. "A big, hairy spider shouted at me while I was gathering mushrooms in the Dalewold. It leapt out from behind a tree and yelled, 'Put that down!'" (False. Mrs. Cogs's youngest daughter, Bridgett, makes this claim, but she has an extremely active imagination.)
7. "Speaking-Fish Weir is located right at the mouth of Dovedale. It's called that because Ian McNeill swears that a talking fish lives there. Of course, everyone knows that Ian is utterly daft." (True. No one in the Dovedale area believes Ian, but he's telling the truth. Ian has talked with Salvel the Talking Trout several times.)
8. "Ben Cogs is a quiet child, but he's a troublemaker. He's always filching things, lying, and pulling mean tricks on the other children. Just last week he pushed Susie into a mud puddle and stole her lunch. Whenever Ben does something bad, the shameless lad refuses to take responsibility." (False. Ben Cogs is a well-behaved and truthful young man. Ben gets in trouble because Grabbo the goblin disguises himself as Ben and pulls pranks on the locals.)
9. "I came across the goblin chieftain fishing on the river one evening. We kicked back for a while, swapped some fish stories. That goblin chief, he's quite a skilled and knowledgeable fisherman." (True. A farmer tells this story at the Inn-on-the-Peak.)
10. "The goblins have a secret entrance to their home, on top of Tor's Cloud Peak." (False)
11. "Freak storms sometimes hit the top of Tor's Cloud Peak. It can be sunny and clear one moment, then the next minute the wind starts whipping ice and rain down on your head. The storms have killed quite a few people over the years, mostly foolish tourists." (True. If the PCs grew up in the Dovedale area, they automatically know this piece of information.)
12. "The storms on Tor's Cloud Peak are caused by an insane air-elemental trapped in a rune circle on top of the mountain." (False, unless the DM wants this rumor to be true.)
13. "Them goblins, they's fairly sluggish during the day. Gets up to most of their mischief in the evenings and at night." (True.)
14. "Once or twice a year, a goblin rides out of the Dalewold on a great slavering wolf and steals one of my sheep. And it seems like every time I turn around, those nasty goblins are stealing my fresh-baked pies and cookies off the windowsill." (True. Mrs. Cogs tells this tale.)
15. "There are three large stone columns in the midst of the Dalewold. They've been called The Three Giants for as long as I can remember, but I don't recall why." (True. Mrs. Cogs or any other sheep farmer within three miles of the Dovedale can impart this information.)
16. "Long ago, in the time of my great-great-grandfather, a powerful druid lived in the Dalewold. She's gone now, but her influence on the land remains. If she were still here, she'd sort those goblins out in short order." (True)
17. "The Dalewold is a dangerous place, with wolves and spiders and panthers and bears running through the woods. I'd avoid it, if I were you, especially after dark." (Partially true; there *are* wolves and spiders in the Dalewold.)
18. "I heard that the goblins are going to demand a payment of 1,000 gp and 40 sheep in order to restore the river. Greedy little bastards." (False)
19. "The goblins must have a new chief. The old chief, he never did anything like this before." (False)
20. "There are wolves in the Dalewold, that's true. But I doubt that they have anything to do with the goblins. That Mrs. Cogs, she's a silly old woman and probably just imagined the whole thing. Or maybe she's just making excuses for that rotten little kid of hers. (False. The PCs hear this rumor from one of Mrs. Cogs's poorer neighbors: a bitter, lazy old farmer.)

W 13, D 9, C 12, Ch 13.

Mrs. Cogs is a large, businesslike woman with a no-nonsense attitude about running her farm.

Parsival and **Petra:** AC 7; HD 1 (M); hp 6 each; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; Save F1; ML 8; AL L; S 12, C 13.

Mrs. Cogs's oldest children are members of the local militia. The twins have leather armor and are proficient with the short sword, dagger, spear, and long bow. If this adventure is being conducted as a solo adventure, the DM may allow the PC to recruit Parsival and Petra.

The PCs can get directions to Mrs. Cogs's farm from any NPC in Ashbourne, although Ian McNeill's directions might be a bit incoherent. If the PCs climb to the top of the hill to talk with Mrs. Cogs, she invites them in for a chat and gives them herbal tea and lemon cookies. Mrs. Cogs talks with the PCs for a maximum of three turns, after which she must get back to work.

Mrs. Cogs's farm is the closest farm to Dovedale, so she is used to the goblins and their conniving tricks. Mrs. Cogs confirms that the farmers' cooperative has put up a 100-gp reward for restoring the river. She emphasizes that the PCs' mission is to restore the river, not necessarily kill the goblins. The goblins have a long history of coexisting with the Dovedale locals, and in some situations being friendly (see rumors #2 and #9). The farmers don't want to start a blood-feud with the goblins.

Mrs. Cogs also tells the PCs rumors #14 and #15. At the end of their conversation, Mrs. Cogs informs the PCs that some of the local farmers gather in the evenings at the Inn-on-the-Peak; the party might be able to get some more information there.

If given a chance, six-year-old Ben solemnly swears to the PCs that he is not the one who keeps doing bad things. Ben explains that one of the goblins living in the Dovedale looks exactly like him. The goblin does bad things (such as stealing pies from windowsills and pushing smaller children into mud-puddles) and then Ben gets blamed for it. Ben claims that he has spoken with this goblin several times and tried to get him to stop, but the goblin just laughs and runs away to pull yet another prank. Ben has tried to explain this to others, but no one believes him. If Mrs. Cogs catches Ben telling this story to the PCs, she scolds him for fibbing and sends him to clean out the cow barns.

Mrs. Cogs's farm is similar to the other farms in the area, which are spaced several miles apart in an arc to the south and west of Dovedale. None of the other farms are quite as well off as Mrs. Cogs's farm. The local farms include: Hanson, Bistern, Llam, Sharplowe, Thorp, Baley Hill, Raven's Tor, St. Bertram's Well, Hillend, Blore Hall, and Standlew.

5. The Dalewold. The Dalewold is a forest located on the northwest edge of the Dovedale. This stand of oaks, elms, maples, and poplars covers several square miles. Sparse undergrowth fills the open areas beneath the forest canopy. The Dalewold teems with animal life, especially sparrows, robins, grouse, quail, and rabbits. The forest also has a bountiful supply of berries and mushrooms, including truffles, tuffets (large toadstools), and chanterelles.

For every hour that the PCs spend wandering in the Dalewold, an encounter takes place on a roll of 1 on 1d6. Consult the "Dalewold Random Encounters" sidebar on page 15, but use discretion. Some of these encounters can be extremely deadly and are unsuitable for beginning PCs. The PCs have a 10% chance per encounter to stumble into a monster's lair, in which case the "number appearing" in the encounter should be maximum. Lairs are not assigned any specific location in the Dalewold. Low-level PCs should not stumble across a monster lair.

6. Speaking-Fish Weir. When the PCs reach this point, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> A weir of large, loosely piled boulders stretches across the Dovedale River. It looks as if it might be possible to cross the river by stepping on the tops of the moss-covered stones. A 50'-diameter pool has formed behind the weir. In normal times, the pool would be much larger and deeper, but the water has retreated to show cracked mud along the banks. Now that the river has been reduced to a trickle, the pool is only 2' deep at its deepest point. Colorful gravel lines the bottom of the pool. Rushes and willows, many of them drooping in the artificial drought, grow along the banks. Two 6' tall, 2' diameter stone pillars stand at the top of the pool, one on either side of the river. A narrow footpath winds its way through the grass and reeds up the side of the pool and along the east side of the river. The footpath goes right by one of the stone pillars.

The stone pillars are carved with pictographs and symbols indicating that the Dovedale is the territory of Gravelbeak the Goblin Chief. When a PC gets within 10' of the pool or one of the stone columns, Salvel the trout sticks his snout out of the water and squirts a nonblinding stream of water at one of the PCs. This is Salvel's way of attracting attention.

Once Salvel has the PCs' attention, he introduces himself, apologizes for getting the PC wet, and asks who the PCs are. By the time he talks to the PCs, Salvel will have used his *detect evil* ability; if the PCs are evil, he will not speak to them. Salvel then asks the PCs what they are doing in the Dovedale. If the PCs tell Salvel that they are going to seek the goblins, restore the river, or similar comments, read or paraphrase the following to the players. This material is presented as a monologue by Salvel, but it's more likely to be a conversation between him and the PCs.

> Your comment about the awful state of the river appears to have piqued Salvel's interest. His shimmering scales glint in the dim sunlight as he swims closer.
>
> "The river is low because the goblins have captured Unda the River Fairy," says the fish. "If you want to restore the river, you'll have to rescue her from their secret lair. The goblins captured Unda about a week ago. They've kept her alive; I would have felt it if she died. They're trying to catch me, too, but I've managed to avoid them so far. I've been trying to find someone to go into the goblin lair and rescue Unda, but you're the first likely prospects that I've encountered.
>
> "If you go up the river, past the three stone giants, you'll find a tall weeping willow that the goblins have chewed on. The entrance to their tunnels is in a shallow cave near that tree. I've managed to find out that much, over the years, by watching them from the river."

Any PC with fishing (hunting) skill

can identify Salvel as a rainbow trout, although he is an unusually large specimen. If the PCs ask Salvel more questions, he knows a few things that may make the PCs' task somewhat easier. For instance, Salvel knows the names of some of the goblins [DM's discretion], which may be of some use to the PCs. Salvel's information is accurate, for the most part, although he does not know that the real reason the goblins kidnapped Unda was to make it easier to catch him. If the PCs ask why the goblins chew on the tree, Salvel responds that he thinks it has something to do with cleaning their teeth.

Over the years, Salvel has teased Gravelbeak fiercely. Salvel's favorite trick is to wait until Gravelbeak gets in an awkward position as he wades along the river. For example, Salvel may wait until Gravelbeak has both his feet on slippery rocks. Salvel then swims up, leaps out of the water, slaps Gravelbeak on the face with his wide silver tail, and then swims away while Gravelbeak splutters and desperately windmills his arms in an attempt to maintain his precarious balance. Salvel takes great delight in teasing Gravelbeak and his family.

Salvel the Talking Trout: AC 6; HD 2+2* (S, 3' long); hp 12; MV swim 180'(60'); #AT 1; Dmg 1-2; Save F4; ML 9; INT 13; AL L; XP 35; New Monster.

Salvel can *detect evil* in a 50' radius. He can also spit a stream of water up to 30' that hits as a 4-HD monster. Anyone struck by the jet of water is blinded for 1-3 turns. Salvel speaks fish, Common, and goblin.

In this region of the world, some animals can speak and understand speech. The long-departed druid mentioned in rumor #16 granted some of the animals in the area the power to speak. The power has manifested itself in at least one fish in every generation ever since that time. The talking animals in the area tend to be the leaders of the normal animals.

7. Small Cave. Small caves riddle the Dovedale's 200'-tall limestone walls. This cave is only one example. Caves are located 30'-40' up the side of the cliff-face. The narrow and twisting caves go back about 30', but humans can go in only about 20' before the stone walls close in. The caves are empty except for some rather barbaric goblin graffiti (written in Common; goblins do not have their own written language).

Dalewold Random Encounters

01-20 **Jumping spiders, large** (1-20): AC 8; HD 1+1* (2' diameter); hp 4 each; MV 60'(20'), web 120'(40'); #AT 1 bite; Dmg 1 plus poison; Save F1; ML 7; INT 0; AL N; XP 25; RC 206 (modified Giant Crab Spider).

The spiders normally scuttle along in the trees and drop on their prey, trailing a safety-line of webbing behind them. The spider's poison does 4d4 hp damage, at a rate of 1d4 hp per round. A saving throw vs. poison (+2 bonus) for half damage is allowed. The spiders have scattered their treasure in the bushes near their lair. The treasure consists of: two suits of chain mail (20 gp), two short swords (5 gp), two daggers (2 gp), a lantern (8 gp), 4 gp, 10 sp, 27 cp, a white cotton bonnet, a pair of children's shoes, a silver spoon (2 gp), and a small wooden bowl (2 cp).

21-35 **Baron Ironbeak,** talking owl: AC 6; HD ½* (S); hp 3; MV 9'(3'), fly 120'(40'); #AT 1; Dmg 1; Save NM; ML 8; INT 10; AL N; XP 6; New.

Baron Ironbeak may trail the PCs if they enter the Dalewold at night. As long as the PCs do not make any hostile moves, he remains friendly. If the PCs bribe him with a mouse or other tidbit, Baron Ironbeak tells the PCs that one of the goblins flies around at night on a giant bat.

35-40 **Greet the Spring's Warm Wind,** treant: AC 2; HD 8* (L); hp 49; MV 60'(20'); #AT 2 branches; Dmg 2d6/2d6; Save F8; ML 9; INT 11; AL L; RC 209.

The treant of the Dalewold is an 18'-tall maple. All encounters with the treant occur at a distance of 30 yards or less. Because the treant closely resembles a normal tree, it surprises on a roll of 1-3 on 1d6. Blunt weapons inflict only 1 hp damage per hit (plus magic and strength bonuses). The treant can animate any two trees within 60' to move at 30'(10') and fight as treants.

The treat approaches the PCs if they do not light a fire while they are in the Dalewold. The treant knows about the dire wolves but is not bothered by their presence because the wolves behave themselves while they are in the Dalewold and never kill more than they can eat. If the PCs talk with the treant, it can confirm that a powerful druid used to dwell in the Dalewold (if the PCs have heard rumor #16).

40-55 **Stirges** (1-10): AC 7; HD 1* (S); MV 30'(10'), fly 180'(60'); #AT 1; Dmg 1d3; Save F2; ML 9; INT 1; AL N; XP 13; RC 208.

A successful hit means the stirge has attached itself to its victim, sucking for 1d3 hp damage until the victim is dead. A flying stirge gains a bonus of +2 on its first attack roll against any one opponent due to its speedy attack. The stirges have a lair in a small cave deep in the Dovedale. The PCs can find the lair if they spend 1d6+2 days searching for it. The stirges have two crystals in their lair, which they picked up because they glittered. The crystals are garnets, and would be worth 100 gp each if cut and polished.

55-70 **Horseflies, giant** (10-30): AC 6; HD ¼ (S); hp 1 each; MV fly 120'(40'); #AT 1 (per 10 horseflies); Dmg 1-2 plus confusion (per 10 horseflies); Save NM; ML 10; INT 1; AL N; XP 6; New.

These giant flies weigh about two ounces each. They attack men, cattle, horses, sheep, and just about anything else that moves. The horseflies swirl around in a great cloud, causing *confusion* in their victims. There must be at least 10 horseflies to confuse or damage one character. Characters who become *confused* suffer a −2 penalty on their attack rolls and saving throws, and cannot cast spells (save vs. spells for no effect).

For example, if 13 horseflies attack a group of 3 PCs, the horseflies can confuse and attack only one of the PCs per round. As soon as the PCs kill 4 of the horseflies, the remaining nine cannot attack effectively. Do not use more than 20 horseflies when running this encounter unless you are confident that the PCs can think of some clever way to escape. The horseflies do not have a lair.

71-80 **Boar, wild** (1-6): AC 7; HD 3* (M); hp 21, 17, 14, 13, 11, 9; MV 90'(30'); #AT 1 tusk; Dmg 2d4; Save F2; ML 9; INT 2; AL N; XP 50; RC 162.

Wild pigs hide in the brush and charge out at their victims. A pig that has 20 yards to charge before reaching its prey can inflict double damage. If the PCs come across just one wild pig, it is a bad-tempered boar (hp 21) that attacks immediately, charging from ambush.

81-00 **Sparrows** (1d20+20), **robins** (1d20+20), **grouse** (1d10+5), **quail** (1d10+5), and **rabbits** (1d6). One of these creatures pops out of the undergrowth, startled by the PCs' passage. The creature may in turn startle the PCs.

For example, "Fishbelly wuz heer," "Humunz tak baths," "Reel goblins ride Wolfs," and "Elfs taste grate/les filing." The DM is encouraged to think up other examples.

8. The Three Giants. Halfway up the dale, the PCs come across three 25′ tall, 10′ diameter granite columns. The rough-surfaced granite columns are quite out of place in the normal limestone formations of the Dovedale. The columns are lined up all in a row, and all of them seem to be leaning slightly forward.

The three columns are really giants transformed to stone. The columns look exactly like natural stone columns; there are no visual clues to their real nature. If anyone uses a *know alignment* spell here, the columns radiate Chaos. A *detect evil* spell reveals that the columns are also evil. Unda the River Fairy knows what the statues really are and will try to stop anyone who is so foolish as to try to return them to flesh.

The columns originated over a hundred years ago, when three evil hill giants rampaged through the Dovedale region. The greedy giants wreaked enormous havoc on the ecology of the area and used the Dovedale goblin tribe as slaves. Finally, the giants' excesses incurred the wrath of the legendary druid of the Dalewold. With the cooperation of the enslaved goblin tribe, she lured the giants out into the open and worked a mighty enchantment that turned the terrible giants into stone.

The Dovedale goblins know this story and have passed the tale of their liberation down through generations. The Dovedale goblins have great status with other goblin tribes because they managed to throw off the yoke of the evil giants, even though they did have help. Chief Gravelbeak and his family will do everything in their power to prevent the columns from being tampered with or restored to life.

The Three Giants: AC 4; HD 8; hp 56 each; MV 120′(40′); #AT 1 weapon; Dmg 2d8; Save F8; ML 8; INT 7; AL C; Size L (12′ tall); XP 650 each, RC 179.

The giants throw rocks (range 30/60/100) for 3d6 hp damage. Each hill giant wears clothing made of uncured animal skins. Each giant has a huge club, a spear, and a bag containing 2d6 × 100 gp. These items were turned to stone along with their owners. One of the giants can speak goblin, and another can speak Common. If their enchantment is ended, the giants are apt to attack anything in sight.

9. Goblin Beer Cellar. This small stone building shaded by tall elms lies mostly underground. Only its peaked shale roof sticks out above ground. A well-worn footpath leads from the main trail up to the building, where 3′-wide stairs lead down to a stout oak door. A huge iron padlock (made by Gravelbeak) holds the door shut. No matter what the weather, the interior of the beer cellar is always cool and dark.

The cellar contains four 30-gallon beer barrels and three five-gallon wine barrels. Two of the oldest beer barrels have marks indicating that they are the property of the Inn-on-the-Peak; the rest of the barrels are unmarked. The goblins stole the two marked barrels from the cellars of the inn when they first completed their secret tunnel, years ago. One of the marked barrels is empty, and the other is half-full of Hal's Old Singular (value 40 gp). The three unmarked barrels are full of incredibly vile goblin-brewed beer. Only one of the

wine barrels is full (value 8 gp). Technically, the half-barrel of Hal's Old Singular beer should be returned to the innkeeper, since it is stolen property. If the PCs return the barrel to Hal, he gives them a reward of 10 gp. Less ambitious PCs could just tell Hal where the barrel is and let him retrieve it. Note that a full beer barrel weighs about 275 lbs., and a full wine barrel weighs about 45 lbs.

Gravelbeak has the only legitimate key to the beer cellar. Strongarm, Gravelbeak's son and the goblin smith, has a crude copy of the key, which he made while Gravelbeak was out fishing one evening. Strongarm's key has an 80% chance of opening the lock. If the key fails to open the door, it bends in the lock and Strongarm must spend 1-4 days repairing the key before he can make another attempt.

Strongarm and his brothers sneak into the beer cellar from time to time and have a few pints of beer when they think Gravelbeak is not watching them. Gravelbeak is well aware that his sons foray into the beer cellar, but he feels that their sneaky behavior is appropriate for young goblins. Gravelbeak will not complain as long as his sons do not overindulge.

10. Goblin Lair. The Dovedale goblins are a very clever and talented clan. They have inhabited the Dovedale for as long as Ashbourne has existed, so all the goblins are familiar with the area. The goblins really like their home and will do their best to defend it, including killing intruders if they have to.

However, if the goblins are in control of the situation, they will attempt to take prisoners to be held for ransom, especially if the PCs have backgrounds as Dovedale locals. The goblins have managed to coexist with their neighbors for many years, and they know that peace (and relative prosperity) will not last long if they start killing lots of people.

As another option, if the goblins capture the PCs, they could try to make the PCs into soup. Everyone knows that leeks are an essential ingredient in any proper halfling (or human, or elf, etc.) stew. Unfortunately, the goblin pantry is fresh out of leeks at the moment, so Chief Gravelbeak will have to send his son Grabbo out to steal some from one of the surrounding farms. While the goblins are gathering ingredients for their soup, the PCs could get a chance to escape.

Remember that goblins are nocturnal. This tribe normally sleeps from 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M., although they always post a guard. The adventure assumes that the PCs enter the caverns sometime during the goblins' sleep cycle. If the PCs enter the goblin lair during the waking cycle, adjust goblin responses accordingly.

10A. Willow Tree. If the PCs have spoken to Salvel, read or paraphrase the following information to the players when the PCs reach this part of Dovedale. If the PCs have not spoken with Salvel, roll to detect secret doors for each PC. If the PCs have heard rumor #2, they each get a +1 on the roll. If the check succeeds, leave out any mention of Salvel when reading the following to the players.

> A large weeping willow on the bank of the river spreads its branches over the dry riverbed. The tree is visibly drooping from the lack of water. Scars and cuts mark the trunk and branches of the tree where the goblins have chewed on the bark. The goblins have also decorated the tree trunk with all sorts of horrible graffiti and carvings. A rope swing hangs listlessly from one of the branches.
>
> Salvel's words about the goblin doorway appear to have been correct. On the eastern wall of the dale, about 20' up, you can see the opening to a cave. The trail leading up to the cave shows signs of heavy use.

The swing will support anyone who weighs less than 100 lbs. If any greater weight is placed on it, the swing breaks as it swings out over the dry riverbed, sending whoever was on it plummeting to the ground. The fall causes 1-6 hp damage. PCs who take time to read the graffiti carved into the willow tree can determine that several generations of goblins have carved their initials into the tree.

10B. Front Door. When the PCs enter this cave, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> Goblin footprints go right up to the back wall of the cave and just stop. When you stand still for a moment, you can hear someone snoring. The sound seems to be coming from behind the wall.

The goblins have grown complacent over the years; clearly there is much traffic in the vicinity of their "secret" doorway. The goblins take turns guarding the front door. If the PCs approach during the day, a goblin named Fishbelly is asleep at the guard post. As long as the PCs do not make noises louder than normal speech inside the cave, Fishbelly will not wake up, even if the PCs open the front door. If the PCs nab the sleeping guard, they can negotiate with Gravelbeak to trade Fishbelly for Unda the nixie. Gravelbeak will grind his teeth, throw a terrible tantrum, and curse for several minutes, but in the end he will agree to the trade.

If the PCs make a loud noise, Fishbelly wakes up (one round), looks out through a crack in the rock to make sure he was not dreaming (one round), and sounds the alarm (third round after the noise). Fishbelly then runs into the maze (area 10D).

Anyone searching for secret doors in the cave has a +1 bonus to find a small stone knob set in a recess that only human-sized (or smaller) hands can reach into. Twisting the knob causes a wide stone door to quietly swing open. A small crack in the rock near the knob goes all the way through to the interior of the cave and allows the guard to look into the outside portion of the cave without being seen. The snoring sound is much louder near the crack in the stone. If the PCs manage to get the door open without making a loud noise and waking Fishbelly, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> The false stone wall swings away on silent hinges to reveal a semicircular interior chamber. This narrow room is warmed by a fireplace at one end, beside which lies a neat pile of peat bricks. Three small wooden chairs are drawn up to the hearth, in which a low peat fire burns. A goblin clad in scale mail is asleep in one of the chairs. A foot-long metal mallet is slowly slipping out of his fingers. A large iron triangle hangs from a chain fastened to the ceiling.

10C. Chimney. The goblins have converted this 150'-tall rock spire into a vent for their cavern system. It is possible to climb to the top of the spire; thieves may add 10% to their chance to climb walls, since there are many handholds. Even people without skill in climbing walls can climb the spire, if they are not wearing armor and they make a Dexterity check with a −4 penalty.

At the top of the spire, thin smoke from the peat fires below wafts out of a 2'-diameter vent hole. A halfling could climb into the hole, but no one larger. The passage goes straight down for 100', then branches. The right branch leads to the fireplace in the front door guardroom (area 10B), and the left branch leads to Bigdome Cavern (area 10E). Small shafts also lead to Haggy the herbalist's room (area 10L), the smithy (area 10K), and various other places throughout the goblin lair. The smaller shafts are too constricted to permit passage.

From the top of the spire, it takes three turns to climb down inside the shaft to the front door, and four turns to reach Bigdome Cavern. Anyone who climbs down the chimney takes 1-2 hp damage per turn from the detrimental effects of smoke inhalation.

This chimney is mostly a ventilation shaft. The various fires in the goblin lair vent their smoke through separate chimneys with better draft. The goblins use this chimney to promote airflow in the lair, and divert some smoke into it to discourage unwanted visitors.

10D. Maze. When the PCs enter the maze, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> The dark tunnel ahead of you divides into smaller tunnels going in a dozen different directions. The crisscrossing tunnels form a confusing maze, with no sign of which way to proceed. The tunnels vary in size from full-sized passages to 3"-diameter holes. In the shadows at the limit of your torchlight, you catch fleeting glimpses of the scurrying shapes of large rodents.

The floor of the maze of tunnels is riddled with pits to fall in and loose rocks to twist an ankle on. If the PCs have a light source, they are in no danger of falling into a pit or otherwise harming themselves. For each turn spent wandering in the dark, roll 1d6. A result of 1-2 indicates that the lead PC has fallen into a pit (60% chance, 1-6 hp damage) or twisted an ankle on a loose rock (40% chance, 1 hp damage). Parties using infravision have half the chance of injuring themselves in the dark.

The twisting intersections of the tunnels forms a confusing labyrinth. The maze of tunnels is nearly impossible to navigate for those who do not know the way, and it is impossible to map. The goblins know their way around the tunnels very well, so they have no problems navigating the maze. PCs who venture into the maze without a guide have an 80% chance of becoming lost. Any PC who has caving skill (*RC*, page 83) can make a skill check with a −4 penalty to avoid becoming lost. The chance of becoming lost applies whether the PCs are going into or coming out of the goblin lair.

If the PCs become lost in the maze, the goblins have a 40% chance (1-4 on 1d10) per hour to discover that someone has invaded their home. If someone stumbles around in their maze for hours, the goblins will certainly notice.

Two to eight hours after the PCs become lost, a giant black rat slowly approaches the PCs, carrying a piece of white cloth clenched in its teeth. The rat's name is Greasyfur, and it can speak Common. Greasyfur offers to guide the PCs through the maze, for a fee. The creature initially asks for sufficient food to feed a giant rat for a week (about one day's worth of human rations), but he will settle for a sandwich and some shiny baubles. Greasyfur will also lead the PCs out of the goblin tunnels for the same fee. If the PCs make any hostile moves toward him, Greasyfur turns and disappears into one of the small tunnels of the maze.

Greasyfur (giant rat): AC 7; HD ½ (S); hp 2; MV 120'(40'), swim 60'(20'); #AT 1 bite; Dmg 1-3 plus disease; Save NM; ML 8; INT 10; AL N; XP 6; RC 201.

The Dovedale Goblins

Unless noted, each goblin has the following statistics: AC 6; HD 1−1; MV 90'(30'); #AT 1 weapon; Dmg by weapon type; Save NM; ML 7 (9 with chief); INT 9; AL C; SZ Small (4' tall); XP 5; −1 penalty to attack rolls in bright light; RC 180.

Each of the goblins has the following equipment: scale mail, short sword, dagger, light crossbow, four crossbow bolts, spear. All the goblins speak Common and goblin.

Chief Gravelbeak: HD 2**; hp 12; Save F2; ML 9; I 12, W 13; XP 30; keys to beer cellar and Unda's cage. Skills: fishing, weaponsmithing, ride dire wolf, leadership.

Gravelbeak has spent enough time above ground that he no longer has the −1 penalty to attack rolls in bright light. In the late evening and early morning, he can often be found near the Dovedale River.

Merekoo: AC 10; HD 1+3** (Shaman 4); hp 9; Dmg by spell or weapon type; Save C4; Size S (3'6" tall); W 14; XP 23; gold ring (worth 15 gp). Skills: ceremony, healing. Spells: *cure light wounds, light, bless.*

Merekoo is Gravelbeak's wife. She dresses in the black hooded garments of the goblin clergy.

Bignose: hp 7. Skills: tracking (+2), hunting.

Bignose earned his name because his nose is at least 8" long and 4" wide. He tracks his prey by sniffing out trails, much as a dog does.

Fishbelly: hp 5. Skills: fishing, swimming, acrobatics.

Fishbelly is very pale and is the only goblin that can swim, hence his name.

Grabbo: hp 4. Skills as T2: OL 20%, FT 15%, RT 15%, CW 88%, MS 25%, HS 15%, PP 25%, HN 35%, double damage with backstab, disguise (craft).

Haggy: hp 4; XP 7. Skills: read and write Common and goblin, deception, herbalism (poisons).

Haggy uses poisoned crossbow bolts. The poison causes an extra 1-6 hp damage (save vs. poison at +2 for half damage, minimum 1 hp).

Stinkfoot: hp 5. Skills: ride dire wolf, cheating.

Stinkfoot has big smelly feet, and he never takes off his socks or boots. The DM may wish to rule that Stinkfoot cannot surprise opponents, because of his unusually potent and offensive body odor.

Strongarm: HD 1+1*; hp 9; Dmg by weapon type +1; INT 8; Size M (5' tall); XP 19; hammer, key (copy) to beer cellar. Skills: armor-making, blacksmithing, mining.

Swoop: hp 3; INT 13; Size S (2' tall); XP 15. Skills: animal training, aerial riding (giant bat).

Swoop is not a member of the immediate family. He is Merekoo's nephew.

Any lone PC who strays from the paths normally used by the goblins will be attacked by Greasyfur's cousin **giant rats** (INT 2, XP 5). The rats will not attack groups of three or more people under any circumstances. These giant rats do not speak and cannot help the PCs leave the maze.

If the PCs get lucky and do not become lost, they stumble into Bigdome Cavern (area E) after 4-6 (1d3+3) turns. If the PCs force Fishbelly or bribe Greasyfur to guide them, passage through the maze takes only one turn.

10E. Bigdome Cavern. When the PCs enter this cavern, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> You are in a cavern that is at least 50' high and 120' in diameter. Flickering shadows caused by the dim fire burning in the central fire pit cloak the upper reaches of the cavern. Several tunnels lead off to other areas. A few ledges perch high on the cavern's walls. Off to the side of the central fire pit, a large iron birdcage is suspended about 10' off the floor by a chain that disappears into the dark shadows cloaking the ceiling. A small, blue-skinned humanoid huddles miserably on the floor of the iron cage.

This large natural cavern serves as the main goblin living quarters. If Fishbelly sounded the alarm successfully, the goblins are waiting to ambush the PCs here. The goblins keep Unda, the river spirit, in the iron cage, to lure the PCs into rushing into the cavern. The goblins wait until the first two PCs enter the cave, then release a rock on a wire. The rock swings down like a pendulum and strikes anyone still in the entryway for 3d6 hp damage (attacks as 4-HD monster). All PCs in the path of the rock are considered to have AC 10 for this attack, unless they have Dexterity bonuses. A saving throw vs. paralyzation for half damage is allowed.

Haggy, the tribe's herbalist, occupies the lower ledge (area 10F). Swoop, the bat trainer, and one of his bats sit on the upper ledge (area 10G). The remaining goblins (and their two dire wolves) hide in the side passages. Gravelbeak's wife, Merekoo, stays out of hand-to-hand combat and uses her spells to the goblin's best advantage. A straight fight between the PCs and the goblins should be short and brutal, and it should end with most of the PCs either dead or captured.

If the PCs have not alerted the goblins to their presence, Bignose is the only goblin in Bigdome cavern. Bignose sits in a comfortable chair by the fire pit, nominally guarding Unda. In this case, Unda will have been singing to Bignose. Unda's slow, liquid song has made Bignose dream of being asleep on the banks of a peaceful river, so the PCs will have a +2 bonus to surprise the goblin. If Bignose manages to shout an alarm, the other goblins arrive in 1-4 rounds. Gravelbeak commands them.

Unda's cage hangs from the ceiling by a stout iron chain. The cage is about 4' high and 3' in diameter. Gravelbeak and his son Strongarm forged the cage, then Merekoo engraved the heavy metal bars with mystical runes to keep Unda from escaping and to prevent her from using her magic. A winch, located near the passage to area 10G, raises and lowers the iron birdcage. A large padlock fastened to the winch keeps it in its current position. A similar padlock holds the cage door shut. Strongarm made these padlocks, which are so well made that they are worth 50 gp each. Gravelbeak has the only keys to the two padlocks.

If a fight occurs in Bigdome Cavern, Unda helps the PCs in any way that she can, even if all she can do is shout advice and encouragement. Unda knows that Gravelbeak has the keys to the winch and the cage, and she tells this to the PCs at the earliest opportunity. Unda is weakened from the stress of her captivity, so she cannot help the PCs by casting spells or using her innate magic. When released from the cage, Unda will be too weak to walk, so one of the PCs will have to carry her. Fortunately, Unda is very small and light (20 lbs., 200 cn). Unda will beg the PCs to return her to her spring as quickly as possible, so that she can regain her strength and restore the river.

Unda the river fairy (nixie): AC 7; HD 1* (S, 2' tall); hp 11; MV 120'(40'), swim 120'(40'); #AT 1; Dmg 1-4 (sword) or 1-3 (arrow); Save E1 or C4; ML 6; INT 13; AL N; RC 197; Spells as 5th-level druid: *detect danger, cure light wounds; speak with animals, obscure.*

Unda appears as a small, beautiful woman with light blue skin, fins, and webbing between her toes and fingers. Unda is invisible while she is in the water (−6 to armor class). She can cast a *water breathing* spell on a humanoid once per day. This form of the spell lasts 24 hours. Because of her duties as a river fairy, Unda also has the innate ability to *detect evil* in a 50-yard radius. She speaks Common, elven, fish, and nixie.

Unda uses a small trident in hand-to-hand combat, although she also has a small short bow. Any creature struck by one of Unda's arrows must make a saving throw vs. poison or fall asleep for 1-6 hours.

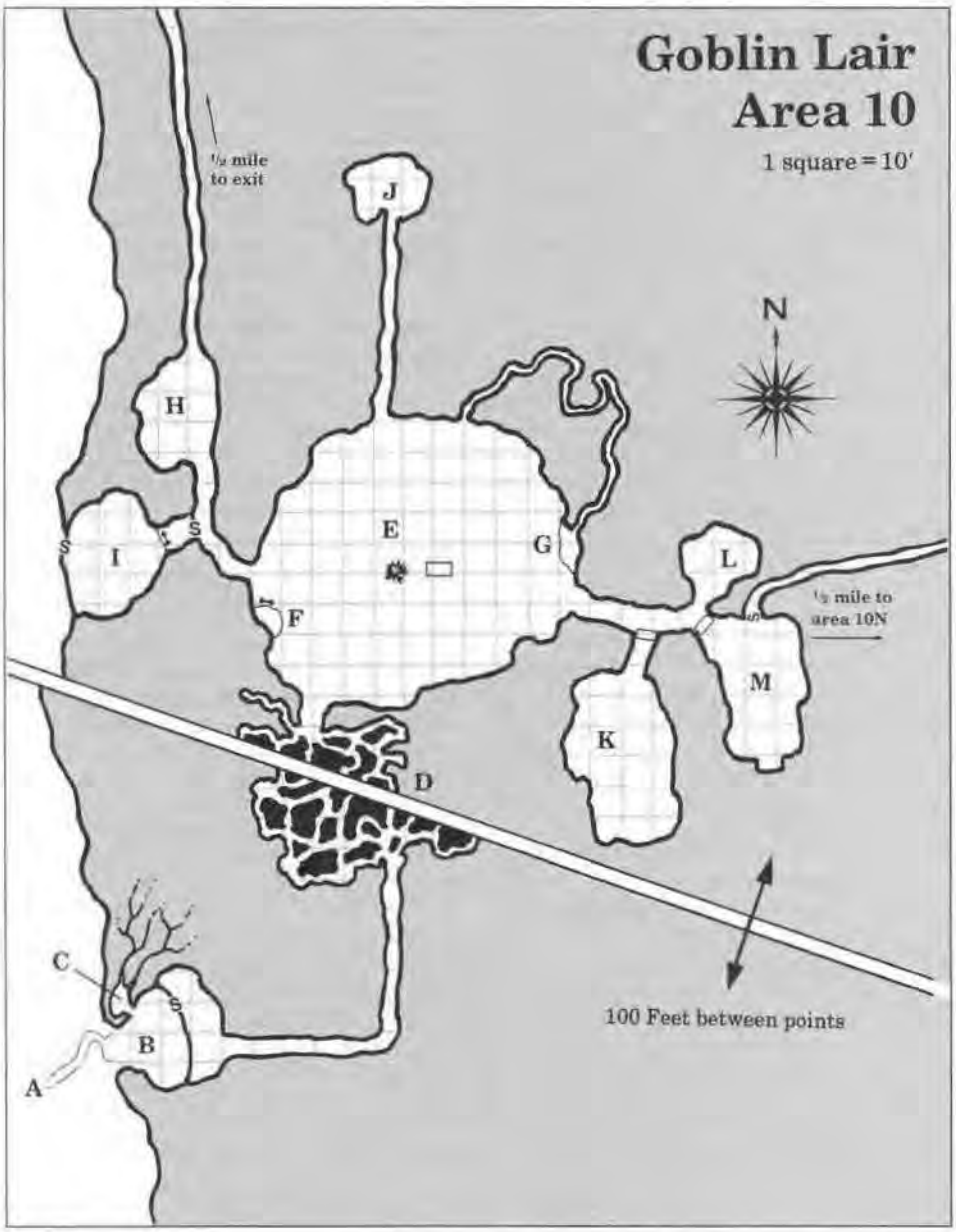
Normally, a nixie may summon a giant bass for aid in times of danger. Unda uses this power to summon Salvel, the talking trout, when she needs help. Unda has never used her *charm* ability because five more nixies are required and there are no other nixies in the Dovedale River.

Unda has more powers than a normal nixie because she looks after a large area alone. Her extra powers were granted to the Dovedale River nixie many years ago by the long-departed druid, and have been passed down from mother to daughter through several nixie generations.

10F. Lower Ledge. The goblins have dropped a rope ladder from this ledge, which is 30' above the main floor. If the alarm has been sounded, Haggy perches on the ledge (the rope ladder pulled up), waiting for an opportunity to use her poisoned crossbow bolts. While she is on the ledge, Haggy has a −6 adjustment to her armor class vs. missile attacks from the cavern floor (AC 0).

10G. Upper Ledge. A small tunnel opening on the main floor of Bigdome Cavern provides access to this high ledge, which is 60' above the floor. Only a halfling or goblin can get through this small tunnel. If the alarm has been sounded, Swoop and one of his bats wait on the ledge for a chance to "swoop" down and wreak havoc. As long as they remain on the ledge, Swoop and his bat have a −6 adjustment to their armor class (AC 0). See area 10I for more information on Swoop and the bats.

10H. Wolf Den. Gravelbeak's family supports two dire wolves. The dire wolves spend most of their time in the Dalewold preying on rabbits, quail, and Mrs. Cogs's sheep, but they have also been known to attack the occasional unwary sheepherder. The wolves spend most of their time (90%) outside in the Dalewold; they sit in the cave only if



the weather is extremely foul, or Gravelbeak or Stinkfoot has called them in (10%). If the wolves are outside when the alarm is sounded, they return in one turn. The wolves get in and out of the cave by way of a narrow tunnel, which runs a half mile north and comes out in a pile of boulders and brush.

Dire wolves (2): AC 6; HD 4 + 1 (M); hp 23; MV 150'(50'); #AT 1 bite; Dmg 2d4; Save F2; ML 8; INT 4; AL N; XP 125; RC 212.

Grabbo sometimes disguises the wolves as sheep so they can sneak in with Mrs. Cogs's flock. The sheep disguises are hanging on pegs in the back of the cave.

Unless the alarm has been sounded, Stinkfoot is here cleaning out the cave, which is also his bedroom. He sleeps on a pile of twigs and grass against the west wall. A nearby footlocker contains eight brand-new pairs of socks (never used), three bars of soap (never used, although one has a bite taken out of it), four cloves of garlic, a deck of marked cards, three pairs of loaded dice, 6 gp, 8 sp, and 3 cp.

10I. Bat Cave. This dark cave is the headquarters for the goblin air force, current membership: one. The cave is 40' above the level of the corridor below. A ladder located behind the secret door provides access. The cave has a secret door to the outside as well, which is disguised as part of the cliff-face. The 10'-wide by 6'-high opening is 60' up the side of the cliff. A winch located in the cave opens the secret door.

The cave has to be high up on the cliff wall so that the bats can get up airspeed when they are carrying Swoop. The most serious limitation to the goblin air force is that it can operate only at night. However, the air force has one major advantage: all of its fliers are "stealth" units. Swoop has trained two bats so that he has a backup if one of the bats is injured or not feeling well.

Giant bats (2): AC 6; HD 2 (M); hp 15, 9; MV 30'(10'), fly 180'(60'); #AT 1 bite; Dmg 1d4; Save F1; Size M (5' long, 25' wingspan); ML 8; INT 5; AL N; XP 20; RC 159.

Although the bats are blood drinkers, they are well fed and will not attack on sight. The bats love to eat fruit and can be bribed not to sound the alarm by throwing an apple or pear to each. The giant bats will attack if Swoop is threatened in any way.

Swoop sleeps here with his furry, flying charges. His wooden cot is covered with several dirty blankets. His gear consists of a leather flying jacket (lined with lambs' wool), a leather flying helmet, a spare set of goggles, saddles, flight lines, safety lines, several spare sets of metal fittings, a signal horn, flight bag, 25 gp, 30 sp, 45 cp, a silver lucky charm (for flying) worth 5 gp, flight boots, and two white silk scarves (3 gp each).

10J. Sleeping Quarters. Grabbo, Fishbelly, and Bignose have their quarters in this cavern. There are two spare beds, in case the goblins have visitors from other goblin clans. Each bed has a large footlocker beside it. A 3' × 8' plank table occupies the middle of the room. The floor is covered by a 6"-deep layer of dirt, shredded paper, dirty clothes, discarded bits of food, and other unsanitary debris.

Grabbo's footlocker contains 4 gp, 13 sp, 21 cp, and an assortment of wigs, makeup, clothes, and accessories. The footlocker also contains a mask that looks exactly like Ben, Mrs. Cogs's youngest boy. Grabbo often disguises himself as Ben and performs all sorts of

mischief around Mrs. Cogs's farm and in Ashbourne. Grabbo knows that Ben gets blamed for the trouble he causes, and that is at least half the fun.

Bignose's footlocker contains an assortment of animal paws and feathers, four mink pelts (10 gp each), 14 gp, 27 sp, and 30 cp.

Fishbelly's footlocker contains 15 gp worth of fishing lures, a pair of hip-waders, and a jar of rotten trout eggs. Anyone who opens the jar must make a saving throw vs. poison or gag and retch for the next turn, during which time the unfortunate person has a −2 penalty to all attack rolls. A 10-gp opal is hidden among the eggs.

10K. Workshop and Smithy. Gravelbeak's oldest son, Strongarm, spends most of his time in the smithy. The room is very hot and lit only by the ever-present ruddy glow of the forge. Strongarm keeps the workshop neat and tidy, which is unusual for a goblin. All the tools are carefully arranged on the walls, and the metal stock is sorted according to type and grade. Strongarm has quite a reputation in goblin circles as a fine smith. He is a large goblin, and his constant work at the forge has made him abnormally strong.

In a corner of the smithy, Gravelbeak has a workbench devoted to his fishing hobby. The surface and the drawers are filled with fishing gear: lures, shiny spinners, lead sinkers, floating lines, sinking lines, bobbers, flies, knives, tools, vises, worm hooks, egg hooks, multi-colored feathers for fly-tying, thread, and wax. The accumulated fishing gear is worth a total of 200 gp.

Gravelbeak still has not had any luck catching Salvel; the fish is just too wily and clever. However, Gravelbeak has a backup plan that, when coupled with the lowered river, just might succeed. In one corner of the bench, a delicate fly-tying vise holds an exquisite fly fashioned with a razor-sharp hook of the finest steel. The hook is hidden beneath golden thread, gold-dust impregnated wax, eyes made of ruby chips, and the softest, rarest, most delicate golden-colored peacock feathers available. The fly is so beautiful that it will tempt Salvel. In normal times, even without the lowered river, Gravelbeak would have a 1-in-20 chance per day of catching Salvel with this fly. With the lowered river, Gravelbeak has a 1-in-8 chance per day of catching Salvel, because food is scarce in the drought-stricken river. Gravelbeak has spent the last several days working on the fly, and it will be ready to use in one more day, after the wax sets. The gorgeous fly could fetch as much as 150 gp from a collector.

Gravelbeak does most of his fishing during the early morning and late evening hours. This is the best time to go fishing, and he doesn't mind getting up a little early, or staying up a little late, in order to indulge in his beloved hobby. Gravelbeak sometimes gets up in the middle of the day to go fishing, if it is cloudy outside.

10L. Haggy's Room. Haggy the herbalist is the only daughter in the goblin family. Her parents are quite proud of her talents. Haggy developed an interest in herbalism at the tender age of seven, when she baked her first batch of poisoned cookies for her brothers. Luckily, none of her brothers died, but to this day not one of them will eat anything that Haggy has prepared.

The tools of her trade fill Haggy's room from corner to corner: knives, mortar and pestle, pounding blocks, hammers, stone mixing pots containing poisons in various states of production, glass storage jars containing noxious substances, pots and pans, a small stove, and a kitchen grater. Haggy distills most of her poisons from mushrooms that she gathers in the Dalewold. The Dovedale goblins trade Haggy's poisons and Strongarm's smith work to other goblin tribes for things that they need and want. There are four vials of finished poison (3d6 hp damage; save vs. poison for half damage) in Haggy's workshop, which could be sold to an unscrupulous person for 50 gp each.

A woolen sock hidden under the pillow on Haggy's bed contains 20 gp, 17 sp, 34 cp, and a poisoned needle. The needle will prick anyone who reaches into the sock, causing the unfortunate trespasser to turn purple, quiver, froth at the mouth, and finally fall into a deep sleep for 1-4 hours (save vs. poison for no effect). Haggy put the needle in her sock as a trap for her prying brothers.

10M. Gravelbeak and Merekoo's Room. The northern part of this room is given over to sleeping quarters for Gravelbeak and his wife, Merekoo. The spacious room has obviously had a considerable amount of work put into its finishing. All the stone walls are smooth and polished. The floor has been leveled and tiled with heavy, red-veined granite. All the chinks and cracks that would normally make a cave subject to drafts have been sealed, making the room a cozy place.

The chief goblin and his wife sleep in a large, comfortable, fur-covered bed in one corner of the room. A bearskin rug (worth 80 gp) lies on the floor near the bed. Gravelbeak's great-great grandfather killed the bear, and the rug has been keeping bare goblin toes off the chilly stone floor ever since.

Beneath the bed, a secret trapdoor is carefully disguised to fit into the pattern of the floor; a PC must roll to detect secret doors. The trapdoor opens to reveal a 3′ × 3′ × 3′ cubbyhole that contains a potion of *healing*, a bag containing 100 gp worth of gold flakes and nuggets (the fruits of Strongarm's mining skills), two golden cups (religious items worth 25 gp each), 80 gp, 140 sp, and 43 cp.

When Merekoo left her family to become Gravelbeak's wife, she promptly appropriated the southern alcove of this room as a shrine to the goblin deities. Merekoo decorated the shrine in the traditional goblin fashion: floor-length black drapes, black granite altar, black wax candles, and several paintings of the goblin deities, mostly done in different shades of black. Merekoo was trained by her mother to be a shaman, and now she serves as the family shaman for the Dovedale goblins. Merekoo spends most of her free time in the shrine, kneeling in prayer to the various goblin gods that have so blessed her family.

10N. Back Door. The goblins' back door is hidden under a 3′-tall boulder in the middle of a cow pasture half a mile east of Dovedale. The boulder requires an open-doors roll to move (a 5 or 6 on 1d6 for most characters, 4-6 for Strongarm the goblin). Only goblin-sized or smaller creatures can wriggle down this narrow, muddy tunnel. A halfling could fit in the tunnel, or possibly a small elf with a minimum of clothing. It takes at least an hour to negotiate the narrow, twisting tunnel from the cow pasture to where it connects to the main goblin tunnels. The goblins use their back door for emergencies only.

11. The Painted Bridge. A small bridge arches across the Dovedale River. The footbridge is 1′ wide and 30′ long. A

Continued on page 49

FLOATING

Shell-shocked in the belly of the beast.

BY STEVE KURTZ

Artwork by David O. Miller

"Floating Rock" is an AD&D aquatic side trek, intended for a party of mid-level player characters (5th-9th level) of any disposition or alignment. The party is assumed to be traveling on a nautical vessel across a large body of salt water.

For the DUNGEON MASTER™

Many sea captains have heard of the Floating Rock tribe, a group of bugbears that can be encountered in just about any ocean or sea. Despite numerous attempts to stamp out this pirating menace, the Floating Rock tribe has managed to persevere, chiefly because of its unique lair.

The success of the tribe lies in its wandering island home, which the bugbears call Floating Rock in their own language. In fact, the entire tribe resides on the back of a zaratan: a huge sleeping sea turtle described fully in MC13, the *AL-QADIM* appendix to the *Monstrous Compendium*. A brief description of the zaratan is given here to simplify running this encounter.

Zaratan: INT Avg (10); AL N; AC −6 (carapace) or 0 (head and flippers); MV swim 2; HD 70; hp 440; THAC0 5; #AT 1; Dmg 10-100; SA swallow; SD immune to poison, magical weapons needed to hit shell; SZ G (350′ diameter); ML 19; XP 65,000; MC13.

The zaratan remains asleep for the entire encounter, awakening only if the PCs inadvertently inflict 20 hp damage (a painful scratch). If the PCs wound the zaratan, the giant turtle instinctively withdraws its head and flippers inside its shell (a mini-earthquake that shakes the entire "island") and remains in this position for 1-10 years unless the PCs provoke it further by inflicting another 20 hp damage. In this case, the zaratan attacks the bothersome pests. Although its massive bite attack arrives last in any given round, everyone within 10′ of the zaratan's target will be swallowed if the attack roll succeeds by 4 more than needed to hit.

Swallowed opponents can survive indefinitely on the stale, trapped air in the zaratan's cavernous stomach, but trapped creatures also suffer 2 hp damage per day unless they can protect themselves from the stomach's corrosive digestive juices. The stomach lining is AC 5. If swallowed PCs inflict damage equal to 20 hp (a case of painful indigestion for the zaratan), the creature will regurgitate the victims. The zaratan's stomach might contain just about anything, depending on the whim of the DM, from pieces of driftwood and chunks of ships, to weapons, armor, and even a small amount of treasure (type Z suggested).

The zaratan's slow metabolism assures it an incredibly long (if uneventful) life, measured in millennia. As it slumbers, it keeps its mouth wide open. Any small- to man-sized creatures stupid enough to swim inside are reflexively swallowed.

The zaratan's shell looks like a sloped, rocky mound over a hundred yards across. In almost all respects, it appears to be a small floating island covered with the Floating Rock tribe's thatched huts, canoes, and even a few palm trees. The zaratan's head, over 50′ across, is easily mistaken for a partially submerged, barnacle-encrusted boulder. During its slumber, the zaratan keeps its eyes shut, covered with stony lids that blend with the rest of its head in texture and color. The zaratan's four flippers, each over 100′ long, appear to be small reefs, supporting a variety of corals, barnacles, and small fish.

ROCK

Pushed along at the whim of the ocean currents, the zaratan is so massive that it does not appear to be floating, although this fact will become quickly apparent if the party inspects the "island" from underwater.

This zaratan is sleeping off its last strenuous encounter with a female of its species, which occurred 97 years ago. Many decades later, the bugbear chief, Mad Dog, discovered the zaratan as it floated lazily by his tribe's coastal home. Feeling inspired to bravery, Mad Dog rounded up his small, inconsequential tribe of bugbears, built a few large rafts, and paddled out to visit the "sacred island."

During the visit, the tribal shaman, One Ear, discovered that the island was alive after casting an *augury* spell. The shaman named the island Floating Rock and declared it a holy site. Using a limited form of telepathy, the zaratan has made it clear to One Ear that it was perfectly content to be attended by the bugbears, provided they were not too bothersome and did not interfere with the zaratan's sleep.

Ever since that first telepathic communication, One Ear has come to revere the tribe's island home as a god. He believes (rightly) that were the island to awaken due to hunger, it might sink beneath the sea and destroy the Floating Rock tribe forever. As a result, the bugbears strive at every opportunity to keep the zaratan well fed and content, sacrificing large quantities of fish and even prisoners captured through piracy to placate their floating deity.

Night Attack

The tribe subsists by raiding and looting whatever passes near their roving island home. The 37 male warriors of the tribe (including Mad Dog and One Ear) prefer to attack at night, using their 60' infravision and the shaman's *augury* spell to guide the timing of their assault. The warriors pile into five large tree-trunk canoes and paddle silently to intercept the PCs' ship as it passes nearby in the middle of night.

Mad Dog, bugbear chief: INT avg; AL CE; AC 3; MV 9; HD 4; hp 30; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type +4; SA surprise; SZ L (7' tall); ML 13; XP 175; MM/32; *two-handed sword +1*, battle axe, spear.

One Ear, bugbear shaman: AC 4; hp 22; Dmg by spell or weapon type +3; SA cast spells as 4th-level priest, surprise; other statistics as per Mad Dog; footman's mace; Spells: *bless, cure light wounds* (×2)*; augury, silence 15' radius.*

Bugbear warriors (35): AC 4; HD 3+1; hp 20 (×7); 17 (×7); 15 (×7); 12 (×7); 10 (×7); Dmg by weapon type +2; XP 120; other statistics as per Mad Dog; battle axe, spear.

The shaman casts a *silence 15' radius* spell on the bugbears' lead canoe to ensure its stealthy approach and boarding. As the first canoe, containing Mad Dog and seven warriors with 20 hp each, approaches the PCs' vessel from behind, its occupants hurl their spears at anyone standing watch on deck. The tribe's technique is so effective that the deck watch suffers a −4 penalty to surprise (surprised on a 1-7 on 1d10). If the party's surprise roll fails, the bugbears from the first canoe clamber on board the PCs' ship without resistance after throwing their spears.

The occupants of the other four canoes judge the resistance met by the lead canoe, then swing around to throw spears at defenders and board the PCs' ship from another location. The bugbears fight—striking to subdue, not kill—until the PCs' ship is taken or the tribe sustains 50% losses (after which they hastily withdraw in their canoes).

If the PCs lose the battle, the bugbears round up any treasure and load the survivors into the canoes. The bugbears sink the PCs' vessel with a few well-aimed axe blows to her hull. The DM should contrive a way for the party to survive the assault so that they can be taken prisoner and continue the adventure.

Celebration and Sacrifice

The bugbears and any PC prisoners paddle back to Floating Rock and are greeted enthusiastically by the other members of their tribe: 22 **bugbear females** (AC 10, hp 6 each, THAC0 19, Dmg 1-6) and 19 **bugbear young** (AC 10, hp 3 each, THAC0 20, Dmg 1-6). These noncombatants fight only when absolutely necessary.

When they return to Floating Rock, the bugbears throw a victory feast using supplies captured from the PCs' vessel. The party members are promptly stripped, gagged, and bound to large wooden spits on the sandy shore while the bugbears eagerly prepare a great celebration. A few bugbears depart in canoes to gather firewood from nearby islands, while others begin basting the PCs with a revolting fish sauce (a brackish liquid made from fermented haddock and small bits of squid).

During this time, most of the tribe members wander over to the bound PCs, to either stare at them in curiosity, test their plumpness with a painful pinch, or help with the continual basting. The chieftain struts proudly around the island, keeping an eye on the prisoners and gleefully displaying any treasures (especially weapons or armor) he may have gained from the PCs. The shaman, meanwhile, retires to the rocky head of the zaratan, where he starts a small fire, breathes in the black smoke, and meditates before the upcoming ceremony.

Give the party time to think and prepare to escape from the festive scene that is unfolding around them. Any obvious attempts by the PCs to break free will be quickly met with a brutal beating from the vigilant bugbears.

While the PCs might expect to be roasted over a slow fire, a much different fate awaits them. After they have been properly basted with a thick coating of the caustic fish sauce, they are blessed by the shaman in a brief, solemn ritual and ceremoniously tossed into the cavernous mouth of the zaratan.

Once the PCs are swallowed, the DM should give the adventurers an opportunity to escape. Perhaps they discover a sharp object in the zaratan's belly, which they can use to cut themselves loose and cause enough indigestion that the zaratan spits them up.

After the prisoners have been sacrificed to the zaratan, the bugbear celebration rises to a fevered pitch. If the PCs had any alcoholic beverages on board their ship, these are quickly consumed, and unabashed revelry breaks loose. Prisoners who have escaped from

the zaratan's belly should have no difficulty skirting the perimeter of the celebration and investigating the bugbear camp, which consists of 11 large shacks constructed of piled rocks and driftwood.

Nine of the shacks house communal living quarters for the tribe, and each contains 1-100 coins of each type except platinum, scattered around the smelly interiors. A thorough search of each shack takes at least one turn but yields 1-4 additional items that might prove useful in escaping from the bugbear's island. The DM can choose from the following list, adding any extra items as necessary: a rusty knife, a piece of flint, a 20' length of rope, a club, a collection of fish hooks, a large sack, a spear, and an empty scroll case.

The 10th shack belongs to One Ear, the shaman. Its interior is dominated by a shrine of piled rocks over which hangs a large sea-turtle carapace. If the PCs decide to move the rock pile, they find the shaman's dried ear, cut off years ago to symbolize his role as arbiter for the gods. A search of the rest of the shack reveals a small golden bowl (worth 100 gp), a flea-ridden cloak, a belt, a hand axe, a candle, a small wooden box, and 20-120 coins of each type (including platinum).

The 11th shack belongs to the chief. Its decor is not noteworthy, except for a large locked sea chest (the key is always in the chief's possession). A search of the rest of the chamber turns up two spears, a large *shield +1*, a copper chamber pot (worth 50 gp) filled with sand, a few cups fashioned from coconut halves, and a small collection of ship's flags (these represent the tribe's conquests; the flag from the PC's ship can be found here, too).

If the PCs get the chest open, they find it contains 5,230 cp, 1,112 sp, 970 gp, 190 pp, and any treasure taken from the PCs or their ship (any armor and weapons taken from the PCs after the battle is in the possession of the chief and his warriors).

The party can easily swipe one of the bugbear canoes and make a stealthy escape from the Floating Rock tribe. However, a wise party might decide to recover some supplies before escaping. Unfortunately, all the food and water is stacked in barrels and crates near the clear area where the bugbears carouse. The recovery of supplies would be an ideal mission for a rogue, who can sneak off with a random box or keg each trip, provided he makes a successful move-silently roll (or other relevant skill check, as ruled by the DM).

Given the battered condition of the PCs after their capture and escape from the zaratan's belly, the likelihood of the PCs' overrunning a large tribe of bugbears (even if the monsters *are* drunk) is slim at best. The PCs should realize that, if their assault fails, they will not be taken prisoner by the bugbears a second time.

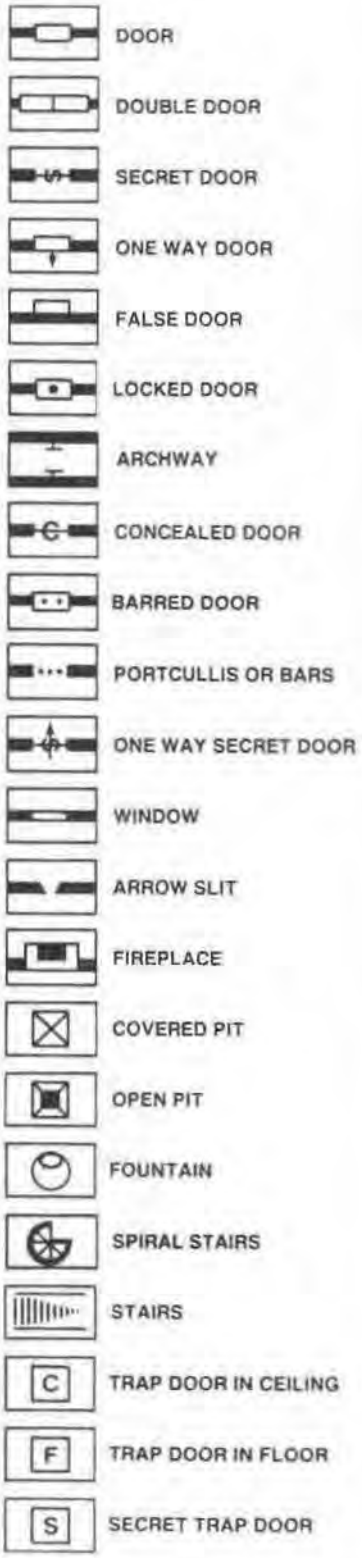
If the party decides to throw caution to the wind and attack the drunken bugbears, assume that the tribe members suffer a −2 penalty to attack rolls and initiative. The bugbear females and young will enter the fray if the drunken warriors seem to be having trouble chopping up the PCs. If the fight goes badly for the bugbears, the survivors attempt to escape in their canoes, leaving the party marooned on the zaratan.

If the PCs wisely decide against attacking the bugbears and try instead to escape, their getaway is assured but their survival at sea is not. With a limited or nonexistent supply of food and water, little in the way of gear, and a few small weapons, any number of unfortunate occurrences (even a storm) could spell certain disaster for the PCs in their stolen canoe. For ideas on how to simulate this kind of a sea journey, the DM is encouraged to read *Men Against the Sea*, the sequel to *Mutiny on the* Bounty.

Steve Kurtz is an eternal graduate student studying orthopaedic biomechanics at Cornell University. He has worked on the Monstrous Compendium *appendix and four boxed sets for TSR's* AL-QADIM® *campaign. Steve is currently recovering after completing the* Crusades Campaign Sourcebook *for TSR's historical reference series.* Ω

MAP SYMBOLS

These symbols are used on most maps in DUNGEON™ Adventures.



GOBLIN FEVER

BY RANDY MAXWELL

"Bring out your dead! Bring out your dead!"

Artwork by L. A. Williams

Randy writes: "This adventure is about an epidemic and the toll it takes on a city. The PCs can be instrumental in finding a cure for the disease. Unfortunately, our own world is afflicted with the epidemics of drugs and AIDS, and there are no magical cures. However, each of us can help bring the epidemics of our world under control. An epidemic starts with a single infected individual. Epidemics are ended by individuals who take the time and trouble to not become infected. Please think about what you are doing."

"Goblin Fever" is an AD&D® adventure for 4-6 player characters of levels 3-5 (about 20 total levels). The PC party should be of basically good alignment; neutral or evil characters may have little interest in helping the plague-stricken city used in the adventure. A mix of classes and abilities will prove useful. The city of Waen Fawr can be placed in any convenient location in the DM's campaign. As there are only human antagonists in the adventure, the DM can raise or lower the level and number of NPC opponents to suit any PC party.

This adventure does not use a standard city map, but instead uses movable tiles to depict the city. The DM should carefully cut apart the map pieces provided on the cardstock insert, and should become thoroughly familiar with the information in "Using the City Map Tiles" sidebar before play begins.

Adventure Background

You are moving down a well-tended road leading to the gates of a city a few miles ahead. There seems to be an unusual amount of burning going on in town; smoke is rising from many points within the city walls. The road dips sharply and the city is momentarily hidden from view by a low ridge. As you ascend to the top of the ridge you see a well-crafted wooden signpost. It is carefully lettered and proudly announces the name of the town: Waen Fawr. Below the careful lettering is a hastily scrawled warning written in red paint and runes of the Common tongue. The letters seem to be melting because the paint has run downward, as if wishing to escape from the very message it spells out. The sign warns of fear incarnate, of a silent, uncaring, and relentless killer. The sign reads: BEWARE PLAGUE.

If the PCs are looking for adventure, they should hurry on to Waen Fawr to see if they can help deal with the epidemic. If the PCs do not wish to proceed to the city, they find the local countryside lawless and unfriendly. The city militia's hands are full within the city, so it no longer patrols outside the walls. Frequent encounters with bandits and crazies may persuade the PCs that the city—plague ridden or not—is safer than the countryside. (The DM can use the "City Encounter Table," page 33, for encounters in the countryside as well.) From fear of the plague and of bandits, none of the inns, taverns, or festhalls near the city are open. (See "The Plague" sidebar for details on the disease.) Many outlying farmhouses, taverns, and inns have been sacked and burned.

Exploring the City

Waen Fawr is a walled city of some 55,000 citizens (primarily humans). Its buildings are constructed of wood on stone foundations; many buildings have stone-lined cellars. The city is neither fabulously wealthy nor poverty stricken. It lies at the crossing of two trade routes and prospers by servicing the trade caravans. The populace consists of a small wealthy trade class, a large middle class of artisans and craftsmen, and a still larger and poorer lower class of peasants, servants, and menials. Usually the city is neither wildly lawless nor oppressively restrictive. Before the plague, Waen Fawr was governed by a council comprised of the heads of the local guilds, representatives from the merchant and trade houses, and the captain of the city militia. Now, because of the crisis, there is virtually no one in charge and utter chaos and lawlessness are rampant.

Adventuring in a plague city is more dangerous than wandering the streets of a normal town. Snipers—crazed or evil men with crossbows—fire on people from the rooftops. Prices for goods and services are much higher because of shortages of supplies and manpower. Some items or services may be completely unavailable (DM's option). The DM should determine the cost of equipment, weapons, armor, or magical items by multiplying the price listed in the *Player's Handbook* by 1d4 + 1.

Continued on page 32

The Plague

Waen Fawr is afflicted with a disease known as goblin fever. The fever is rare, even among the goblinoid races, and generally afflicts only young and adolescent goblins, hobgoblins, and orcs. The goblinoid races regard this disease as something like the flu. It is considered more of a nuisance than a calamity and is rarely fatal. Among humans (or anyone with human blood, such as half-elves and half-orcs), the disease is highly contagious, virulent, and deadly. For elves, dwarves, and halflings, the disease is seldom fatal but causes a prolonged period of incapacitation.

An outbreak of goblin fever in a human enclave is usually brought in by an adventurer, trader, or other wanderer who came in contact with an infected member of a goblinoid race. The spread of goblin fever is difficult to control because of the disease's long incubation period. The original carrier can infect dozens of people, and those people in turn can infect others, before any symptoms appear. By the time the disease is identified, it is already out of control.

Goblin fever can be cured using *cure disease, heal, limited wish,* and *wish* spells. Unfortunately, an epidemic of the proportion seen in Waen Fawr soon overwhelms anyone attempting to eliminate it with *cure disease* spells. In addition, the symptoms of goblin fever include deterioration of the central nervous system, causing forgetfulness. This further aggravates the problem as clerics and mages forget their spells.

Other symptoms include severe, unpredictable, and rapid mood swings. The afflicted person passes suddenly from dancing with joy to depressed, almost suicidal behavior. In the final stages of the disease, victims become violent and must be restrained or they become a danger to themselves and others. Anyone with human blood who survives this period of violence lapses into a coma and eventually dies. An elf, dwarf, or halfling falls into a coma for 2-8 days, then dies if not constantly cared for. Given the proper care, a dwarf, elf, or halfling eventually emerges from the coma with a reduction of 1-12 points each in Intelligence, Wisdom, Dexterity, and Constitution. Each ability's points return at a rate of one per week until the affected scores return to normal. Points lost to the disease can also be restored using *restore, heal, limited wish,* or *wish* spells.

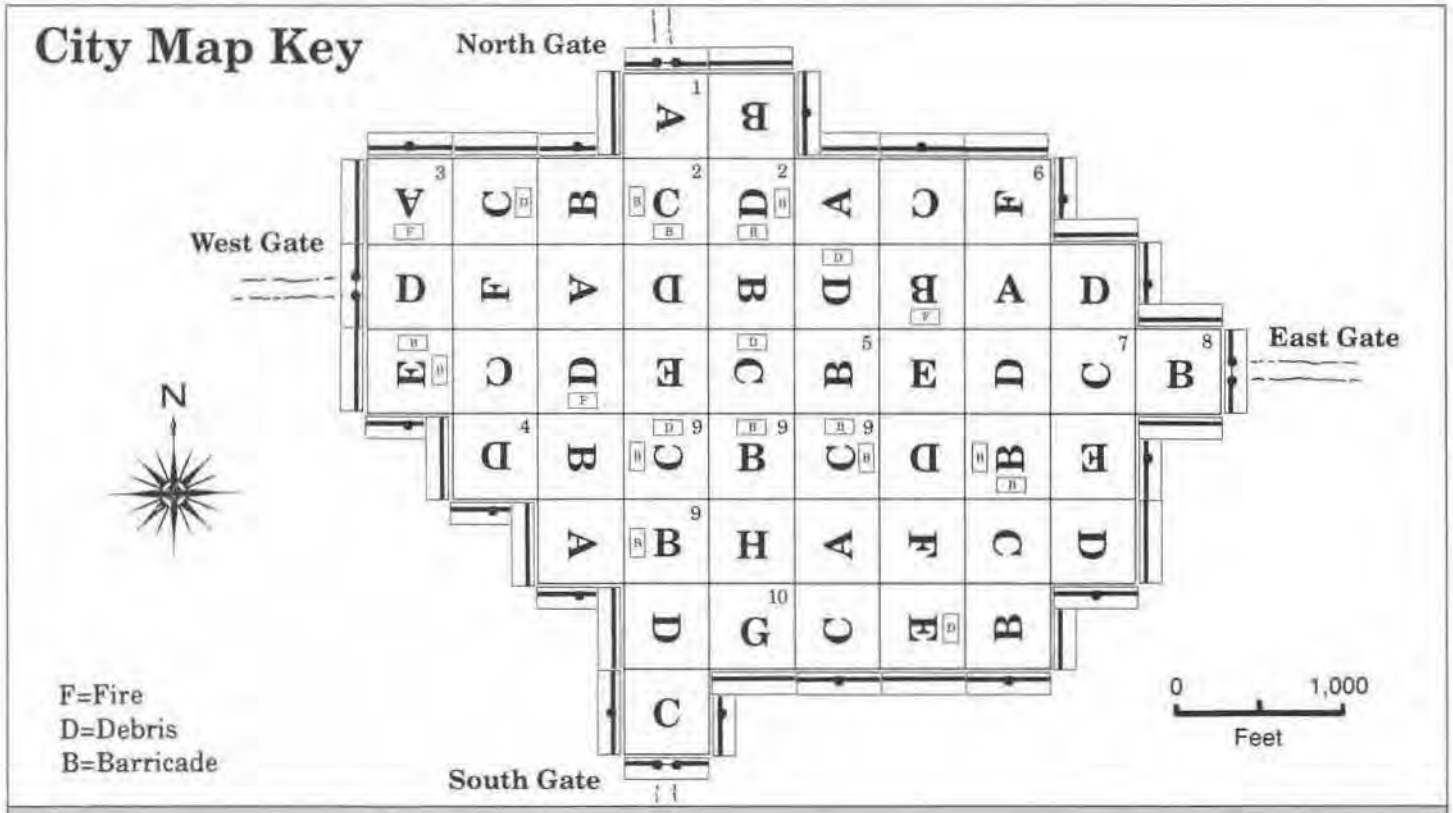
The cure for goblin fever is a special tealike elixir that is not a potion or magical substance. However, the elixir is made to an exacting formula of arcane ingredients and must be prepared by an alchemist. Even a small mistake can ruin the elixir and render it inert. The elixir cures goblin fever and returns the victim to normal in 2-8 hours.

PCs and the Plague: There is a base 10% chance per day of a PC contracting the plague while in the city. The chance increases by 1% for every point of Constitution under 10 (a PC with a Constitution score of 8 has a 12% chance of contracting goblin fever). The chance decreases by 1% for every point of Constitution over 15 (a PC with an 18 Constitution has only a 7% chance of contracting the disease).

If a PC contracts the disease, symptoms begin appearing after 1d4 + 7 days. At this time, the PC loses 1 hp and one point of Intelligence, Wisdom, Dexterity, and Constitution per day. As ability scores decrease, the PC also loses any bonuses gained for high scores. No ability score can be decreased below 3; once this minimum is reached, the disease ceases to affect that ability.

While affected by the disease, the PC suffers severe and unpredictable mood swings (the player can ham it up as much as he wishes). After 1d4 + 4 days, the PC becomes extremely violent and is a danger to himself and others. In any encounter the PC has with friends, foes, or innocent bystanders, roll 1d6 and consult the following values. 1 = PC attacks until subdued or killed; 2-3 = PC is aggressive, angry, and completely uncooperative; 4-6 = PC is sullen and testy, complying grudgingly to only the most insistent of pleas.

A human, half-elf, or half-orc PC dies of goblin fever when his hit points reach zero. A demihuman PCs whose hit points reach zero passes into a coma and must be constantly cared for or die (as above).



Using the City Map Tiles

The city map tiles are double-sided and labeled A through H. Each tile represents a 500' × 500' neighborhood of the city of Waen Fawr. The tiles are designed to depict as many different types of locales as possible. The buildings of the city are tightly packed together and, while PCs are free to move around within a tile, the only way to pass from one tile to another is on the roads. The tiles are not scaled to miniature figures, but players may use them to show the location of each PC in relation to hazards, buildings, and other PCs. The DM may wish to use his own figures to show players which buildings contain sniper nests or other hazards.

The City Map Key shows the location and orientation of each tile and defines the city's size and shape. As the PCs move through the city, the DM places the map tiles on the table to match the design of the City Map Key. The letter in the center of each tile is used for orientation. For example, if the letter is upside down on the City Map Key, the DM should be sure that the letter on the tile is upside down when it is placed on the table.

Buildings and Structures

Buildings depicted on the tiles are color-coded by usage:

Yellow = Private residence, rooming house

Green = Commercial building (shop, office, or service business)

Red = Warehouse, storage

Blue = Inn, tavern, restaurant, guild hall

Brown = Stable, barn, shed

White = Temple, shrine

There are no structures in Waen Fawr over three stories high. If it is necessary to determine the height of a building, the DM can roll 1d4 − 1 to determine the number of stories. A result of 0 means that the building has been demolished by fire.

Ninety percent of the buildings in Waen Fawr are occupied, the rest uninhabited. However, the windows and doors of all buildings are shuttered, locked, barred, bolted, and nailed. Until the PCs attempt entry, it is impossible to tell which buildings are occupied and which are not. Occupants defend their building against intruders to the best of their ability. Use the "Militia" entry from the City Encounter Table to determine the number and statistics of the occupants defending a structure. The occupants of most buildings (even those driven mad by goblin fever) are considered innocent bystanders. The DM should not award any experience points for defenders the PCs harm while entering a building.

Building details, interior maps, shop names, condition of buildings, hit-point damage needed to force open doors or windows, etc., are left to the DM's discretion. The DM may find it useful to use typical floor plan maps such as those from FR1, *Waterdeep and the North* or any other products on hand.

Placing the Tiles

When the adventure begins, the DM places the map tiles in the configuration of the north gate area (see Figure 1). When the PCs leave this area, the tiles are moved and reoriented one at a time as each new area is entered (see Fig. 2). In this way, encounters, pursuit, and evasion can all take place on the tabletop in much the same scrolling fashion as a computer game maze.

The DM may wish to make a complete map of the city, and PCs may have access to partial maps of the city. However, because of the many fires, barricades, and dangers in Waen Fawr, maps are of little use. Once the PCs have left the safety of militia-controlled areas, they may not be able to return by the way they came. The old saying, "You can't get there from here," is very true when wandering the streets of Waen Fawr.

Figure 1

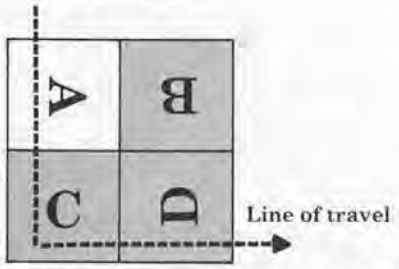
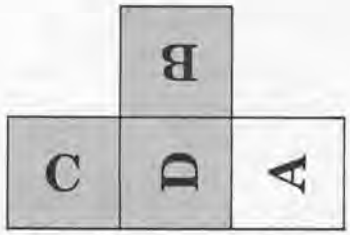


Figure 2



Note the orientation of the letter A in Figures 1 and 2.

Tile Descriptions

Tiles A-D. These are neighborhoods of homes, apartments, small shops, taverns, and inns. Movement through these areas is at normal movement rate for the party, and only those hazards listed in the "City Encounter Table" are present.

Tile E. This section of the city contains warehouses, covered storage areas, and storage sheds. Movement in the area is at the normal movement rate, and only the hazards listed in the "City Encounter Table" are present.

Tile F. This area of the city has been devastated by fire. Mounted movement through the rubble is impossible, but the PCs can pick a dangerous path on foot. Movement rates are reduced to one-third normal, and a roll for concealed hazards is made for every 50' of travel. Do not roll on the "City Encounter Table" for this tile. Roll 1d6 and consult the following chart:

1-2 No hazard

3 Shifting rubble, a PC (DM's choice or random roll) must roll Dexterity or less on 1d20 or lose his footing and fall, taking 1-4 hp cut and stab damage from glass shards, broken crockery, and loose nails.

4 A PC steps in a "hot pocket," a pile of glowing coals concealed by other debris. The pocket collapses around the PC's foot for 1-4 hp burn damage.

5 A PC steps on debris that collapses, dropping him into a cellar for 1-6 hp falling damage.

6 The ground collapses beneath the entire adventuring party, dropping the PCs into a cellar. Each PC takes 1-6 hp damage.

Tile G. This is the Temple of the Pools (see encounter 10). Movement rate is normal. The DM should consult the text on pages 44-48 for encounters in the temple area (do not roll on the "City Encounter Table"). In future adventures, the DM may use this tile to depict a castle, college of magic, warrior's school, dungeon, fortress, etc.

Tile H. This open park was formerly used by peddlers to set up booths, tents, and pavilions on market days. Paths wind among the park's trees and bushes, with benches placed at convenient locations. No market days have been held since the plague broke out; the park is one of the few open areas in the city where funeral pyres can be lit. Movement rates are normal, and only the hazards listed on the "City Encounter Table" are present.

Token Descriptions

The tokens represent barriers to the PCs' progress through the city. The city walls, gates, and towers form the border of the city (see the City Map Key). Other than through the northern gate, it is impossible for the PCs to pass beyond the city walls, which are defended by goblin-fever-afflicted soldiers and citizens. (As always, the PCs have a right to defend themselves from attacks, but the DM should give no experience points for any gate, tower, or wall defenders killed or wounded by PCs. They are disease victims and not responsible for their actions.)

The barricade, debris, and fire tokens represent barriers within the city (see the City Map Key for locations) and are not to scale. These tokens are always placed across a road through a tile. Unless contradicted by logic or the text, the DM is free to block any road he wishes within the tile. If the PC party has split up and occupies more than one tile, the DM can use photocopies of the tokens or any other obvious marker as substitutes for the cardstock tokens.

Gates. The city gates are constructed of huge fire-hardened and iron-bound wooden beams. The east, south, and west gates have been barred, sealed, and blocked with rubble. Before these gates can be reopened, the PCs must remove the archers from the adjacent towers. Then a large work crew will take one full day to clear away the rubble piled against the gates, and a blacksmith needs yet another day to remove the bolts, chains, and other metal debris sealing the gates.

Towers. The city's towers are brick and stone constructions standing 25'-30' high, pierced by innumerable arrow slits, windows, and other openings. Tower defenders rain arrows on anyone coming within range. Each tower is defended by 6-24 city militia (see area 1). In addition, the guard units are augmented by 2-12 citizen-soldiers (see area 2). If the PCs return missile fire, see page 99 of the *PH* and treat the tower defenders as 90% hidden by cover (−10 to armor class). The defenders of the towers are lost in fever-induced paranoid delirium. They neither negotiate nor surrender. The towers are sealed from the inside and require a ram or similar siege device to open the doors.

Walls. The 20'-high city walls are primarily made of brick, stone, and packed earth. Perched on the walls or patrolling their lengths are another 2-8 city militia and 2-8 citizen-soldiers (see areas 1 and 2 for statistics). The wall defenders suffer from the same paranoid delusions as the tower guards, and will fire indiscriminately on anyone passing near the wall. If the PCs return fire, treat the wall defenders as 75% covered (−7 to AC). The wall guards have burned or blocked the staircases up to the wall and use only rope ladders to come and go. Therefore, it is extremely difficult for the PCs to get at the archers, and very dangerous to try.

Continued on page 32

Continued from page 29

The city is constantly shrouded in foul-smelling smoke from burning buildings. There is no organized attempt to extinguish the blazes, but residents living near a burning structure may form impromptu bucket brigades in an attempt to put out a fire. There are no street lights in the city. Torches, lanterns, or other sources of light at night draw the attention of snipers. From arson, accidental blazes, and the pyres of the dead, Waen Fawr smolders by day and is a netherworld of flame and wildly dancing shadows at night.

Continued from page 31

Barricade. This blockade of trash, boxes, lumber, and other assorted junk has been constructed across a roadway by rogue soldiers or vigilantes (see the "Militia or Vigilantes" entry in the "City Encounter Table"). The barricade stops progress along the roadway and can be passed only through negotiation, bribery, combat, or a combination thereof.

Debris. A burning building or other large structure has collapsed into the street, effectively blocking all forward movement. This is not a mere barricade or pile of garbage, but a huge, dangerously shifting hill of smoldering rubble. The PCs may clear a path through the debris in 3-36 (3d12) hours but cannot scramble up and over it. If the PCs clear away the debris, the DM should remove the token.

Fire. A major blaze blocks further progress through the area. After the fire has burned for 24 hours, the DM should replace this token with a debris token. Fire locations noted on the City Map Key are for the first 24 hours that the PCs are in the city. After this time, the DM may place fire tokens in any logical location. There are always 1-4 fires burning per day, but no fires should be placed in the city militia-controlled area. The fires are intense and dangerous. While *resist fire* spells and magical items that protect against fire work normally, it is obviously suicidal for PCs to attempt to pass through these blazes. It is impossible to see through the smoke and flames, but over the fire's roar PCs hear beams and timbers falling, roofs collapsing, floors falling into cellars, and the explosions of kegs and barrels of cooking and lamp oil.

1. North Gate and Militia Compound.

> Two silent guard towers flank the closed city gates. No traffic waits to enter the city; as you approach, you can see why. Painted across the gates, with more care and fewer drips than the signpost, are the words "Beware Plague."
>
> Suddenly, you are hailed from the eastern watchtower. An unseen guard intones, "Plague walks abroad in the city." Apparently, the verbal warning is issued in case no one in the party can read. The great city gates remain shut, but you notice a smaller door near the base the eastern tower.

If the PCs bang on the small door or otherwise try to attract attention, it is eventually opened by two tired-looking guards who wear the worn look of overworked men.

> The guards neither welcome you to the city nor dissuade you from entering, but only look at you as if you were more grist for death's mill.

By talking to the gate guards, the PCs can learn the name and nature of the plague afflicting the city (see "The Plague" sidebar). They also hear personal opinions and rumors—some true, some false, and many contradictory—about the plague and the current state of affairs in the city:

"The plague was deliberately started by the rulers of a neighboring city that wants to take over Waen Fawr. When the city is weak enough, they'll sack and burn it." (False)

"Some parts of the city are under the control of demented cults and gangs." (True)

"The disease is unstoppable. It's only a matter of time until the entire city is wiped out." (False)

"The fever has about run its course. The crisis will be over in a few days." (False, but can be made true depending on the PCs' success.)

One gate guard escorts the PCs to the militia compound nearby. The city militia is well trained and equipped, but overworked. Their numbers have been decimated by plague and the ongoing conflicts in the city.

The person in charge here is the wizard Zeeker Olm. He knows a cure for goblin fever, and the militia is willing to take orders from him while he attempts to rid the city of the disease. The city is in the grip of fear and chaos, allowing a few people to take charge of specific areas because no one else is willing to take the lead. In addition to Zeeker Olm, 15 off-duty militiamen are resting in the compound.

The compound was formerly a large (200′ × 400′) warehouse and stable. The exterior reeks of horse manure and the interior retains the aroma of oats and hay. The guards have contrived a number of bunks, cots, hammocks, and pallets at one end, while the other is filled with an odd assortment of what looks like alchemical equipment.

> Moving in and out of sight among the clutter is a tall, thin man in a stained green robe. He finally notices your entrance, stops a moment to make an adjustment to some device, then approaches you. He looks weary, as if hectic days and sleepless nights weighed heavily on him. As the gaunt man addresses you solemnly, the scene reminds you of a tired general addressing his defeated troops before the last battle of a lost cause.
>
> "As you may have noticed, you've come at a bad time, and the city may not be as comfortable as you wish. We are faced with a serious epidemic. Some fool caught a dose of goblin fever and didn't have the decency to die alone. We'd be grateful if you stayed here in Waen Fawr to help."

Zeeker deals with the PCs as honestly as possible under the circumstances. Though obviously tired, his demeanor is businesslike. If the PCs agree to help, Zeeker tells the party what assistance he needs.

There is a cure for goblin fever, but it requires very specific ingredients and very careful preparation. The cure is made from a large amount of chamomile tea, distilled water, powdered dragon's tooth (any color dragon will do), 18 or more vials of holy water, and small amounts of mundane and arcane substances (DM's choice, see below). This concoction is brewed, then strained through a filter of papyrus.

Continued on page 34

City Encounter Table
(Roll 1d8+1d12)

Roll 1d10 every hour from sunrise to sunset, and every two hours from sunset to sunrise: 1-7 = No encounter; 8-9 = Encounter occurs at the DM's option; 10 = Roll 1d8+1d12 and consult the table below.

The smoke and haze of the fires in Waen Fawr affect visibility and range of vision. The smoke decreases encounter distance during the day, but the fires increase encounter distance at night. For daylight encounters treat the distance as Mist or Light Rain. For night encounters, treat the distance as Twilight (see page 117 of the *PH*).

2. **Bandits** (2-16): Bandits roam the city looking for anything they can steal. They may or may not attack, depending on how strong the PCs appear. (See area 3 for details.)

3. **Crazies** (1-8): AL any; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 3 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML see below; XP 15; club or dagger. Crazies are those unfortunates in the last stages of goblin fever. They are unpredictable, often violent, and may attack without provocation. Because they are fever victims, no experience points are awarded for killing them. However, the PCs have the right to defend themselves from attacks and should not be penalized for doing so. The experience points listed should be awarded only for crazies subdued and returned to a safe location.

4-6. **Animals:** Many animals are free in the city. Some have been left unattended; others flee in terror from the many fires. Roll 1d4 and consult the following list:

1 = **Wild dogs** (4-16): These packs of stray dogs are not particularly dangerous unless provoked, scared, or very hungry. (See area 8C for details.)

2 = **Guard dogs** (2-8): These trained dogs have been unleashed in the confusion and chaos of the city. They are dangerous and may attack without provocation. (See area 6 for details.)

3 = **Bull** (1-2): INT semi; AL N; AC 7; MV 15; HD 4; hp 15; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; SA stampede; SZ L; ML 4; XP 120; MM/243 (Mammal, Herd, Cattle). Bulls may charge an opponent for 2-12 hp of impaling damage and an additional 1-4 hp in trampling damage. Bulls loose in the city are skittish and charge anyone who approaches them.

4 = DM's choice or roll again. Many relatively harmless animals are running loose, such as horses, milk cows, and goats. The DM may include a pet tiger, trained bear, or other more exotic (and dangerous) animal.

7-11. **Militia** or **Vigilantes** (2-12): AL any evil; AC 7; MV 9; F2; hp 11 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 11; XP 35; ring mail, short sword, dagger. There are many newly formed militia groups in the city, and some are mere ruffians looking for trouble. These men do not have the plague and are responsible for their actions. When the PCs encounter such a group, the DM rolls 1d100 and consults the following: 01-25 = Militia is a gang of evil bandits; 26-75 = Militia is neutral; their behavior depends on the PCs' actions (roll on the "Encounter Reactions" table, page 103 of the *DMG*); 76-00 = Militia is good aligned and is attempting to restore order. They are friendly to the PCs once the party makes its quest known.

12-15. **Mob** or **Looters** (3d20×10): AL any; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 3 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 8; XP 15; knife, club, or torch. This may be a fight between rival gangs or a general riot. PCs can work their way through the riot in 6-60 (6d10) rounds.

For each turn that the PCs are involved in a mob encounter, roll 1d100 for each of the following incidents. It is possible for each PC to suffer all the following in every turn:

5% chance of losing a valuable object in the crowd (accident or pickpocketing). The object lost should not be something that hinders completion of the adventure.

5% chance of being knocked down and trampled by the crowd for 2-8 hp damage.

5% chance of being hit by a projectile (bottle, board, or rock) for 1-4 hp damage.

16-18. **Refugees** (2-16): AL any; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 3 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 8; XP 15; knife or club. These are ragged people were forced from their homes by fire or violence. Award experience points only for refugees led to a position of relative safety.

19. **Snipers** (1-4): This may be a single individual taking potshots from a roof or an organized band killing and robbing victims. Snipers fire from rooftops, windows, or any concealed location. (See area 8B for details.)

20. **Special:** These events are unusual and should be used sparingly. Each occurs at least once before any are repeated.

1 = **Death cart:** This encounter sets the mood of the adventure and gives the PCs some idea of the grim realities of a city in the grip of plague. The air of despair, hopelessness, and fear the death carts embody cannot be exaggerated or overplayed. These horse-drawn carts are led slowly about the city, accompanied by a crier who clanks a metal bell and chants, "Bring out your dead!" The dead are brought forth and unceremoniously dumped in the cart for disposal. When full, the cart is brought to an open area (map tile H), where the bodies are stacked, covered with wood and oil, and set ablaze without rite, ritual, or eulogy.

2 = **Fiery Collapse:** A crucial beam in a burning building collapses or a smoldering fire flares up when the flames spread to dry thatch, a barrel of lamp oil, or another flammable substance. The beam collapses or fire flares in the upper story of a building directly overhead and showers the PCs with flaming debris. Each PC must roll Dexterity or less on 1d20 or take 2-12 hp damage.

3 = **Projectile:** An object such as a bottle or brick strikes a PC (DM's choice or random roll) for 1-4 hp damage. (Projectiles are never weapons or grenadelike missiles.) The object was thrown in anger, boredom, or pointless vandalism, but the reason has nothing to do with the PCs.

4 = **Individual:** The PCs encounter a local citizen (roll on the City or Town encounter table of the *Monstrous Compendium*) who is attempting to reach an area of relative safety. If this person is detained, the DM must decide what questions the individual is able or willing to answer and in what detail. The DM should pre-roll a few such individuals before beginning play so that they are ready to use if this encounter occurs.

Continued from page 32

When imbibed, the tea works wonders. It cures goblin fever, relieves all symptoms, and returns the infected person to normal within 2-8 hours. However, to cure a city the size of Waen Fawr requires great washtubs of the stuff. If the PCs choose not to pursue the cure ingredients, other adventurers and local citizens are available for the job (and the credit and reward).

However, the PCs do not get off easily if they decline Zeeker's offer. They are immediately drafted into the city militia and are not allowed to leave Waen Fawr until the crisis has ended. The militia is working 16 hours on duty and 8 hours off. They are not being paid but receive food, shelter, and the promise of one gold piece per week, to be paid as soon as the crisis is over. If the PCs dislike the duty, they can easily escape either into the disease infested city or, with some difficulty, over the walls or out the gates.

The militia and others have supplied Zeeker with most of the needed equipment, the chamomile, distilled water, and other special substances. (If he wishes, the DM may use the search for small amounts of mundane and arcane ingredients for added adventures.)

Zeeker still needs the powdered dragon's tooth, the holy water, the papyrus, and a copper steam-driven adjustable double boiler, preferably of gnomish make (because they're the best). This item is required for cleaning the instruments and devices used in making the fever cure. The items are boiled to insure no foreign substances cling to their surfaces and inadvertently contaminate the fever cure. Simply boiling the items in a pot works, but it takes much longer and is a very poor substitute for a gnomish double boiler. The wizard states:

> "I don't know where you can find the boiler I need. The only place that would possibly carry such an item is Cooper's Copper on Caper Street. Go a bit south, then turn west. If you get to the west gate, you've gone too far.
>
> "One of the local inns or alchemical shops might also have such a boiler, but to search each establishment would take years.
>
> "You may be able to locate some powdered dragon's tooth at Jade's alchemical shop. She specializes in such things. It's southeast of the west gate.
>
> "I also know there's a good deal of holy water and a supply of papyrus in the Temple of the Pools, near the south gate. But be warned! That area is in the hands of some demented cult. We don't know what they want or who they are, or exactly where they're located. My assistant, Danell, went looking for them to offer money or goods for the holy water and papyrus. They captured him and sent word that, unless we surrender the entire city, they're going to sacrifice him in some sort of ritual. They gave us no time limit; for all I know they've already done it.
>
> "I'll give you 1,000 gold pieces out of my own pocket if you can rescue Danell. He's my friend and knows what's needed here. The work will go faster if I have a trained assistant. I'd try to find him myself, but I can't abandon my duty to the city, whatever my heart may say.
>
> "What recompense the city can offer for your help is difficult to say. Because this is a time of great uncertainty, all promises may be in vain. But, should the city survive with your help, I am sure the populace would be grateful—and generous."

Zeeker makes no promises of either wealth or glory, and gives the PCs fair warning:

> "If you go, take this advice. Levitation and flying spells can get you killed. There are madmen and snipers on the rooftops, including spellcasters who'll use spells against you. If you take to the air, you'll draw fire from several different directions.
>
> "Yesterday, a guard mage named Sigmund tried to levitate for a quick reconnoiter of the situation in an adjoining neighborhood. He got an arrow in the eye for his trouble. And don't bother trying to go round the walls and through the other gates. We've tried several times, but the north gate is the only one open. Stay away from the city walls. There are archers up there who shoot at anyone who passes beneath. We control only the walls of the north gate and above the barracks. If you pass beneath any other, beware!"

With that last cheery word, Zeeker Olm returns to work among the strange contraptions of his hastily established laboratory. If the PCs have questions, they must follow him about to ask them. Any answers Zeeker gives are constantly punctuated with "Don't touch that!," "Watch where you're stepping!," and "That's not a toy!" No matter how persistent they are, the PCs can learn little more than Zeeker already told them.

The wizard's warnings are serious. If the PCs pass beneath gates, towers, or the city wall outside the protected area, see "Using the City Map Tiles" sidebar for details. Any PC who attempts to *levitate* or *fly* attracts fire from snipers (see the "City Encounter Table" for sniper statistics). For every round in the air, the PC draws fire from 1d4 + 1 snipers using heavy crossbows. In addition, there is 10% chance per round of a spell-casting sniper using a *magic missile* or *lightning bolt* spell (the DM also has the option of a sniper using magical items). The smoke shrouding the city prohibits the PC from gaining any useful information from aerial exploits.

Zeeker Olm: AL LG; AC 9; MV 12; M12; hp 27; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; I 18, Ch 18; ML 13; *ring of protection +1*, dagger.

Spells: *comprehend languages, identify, read magic, unseen servant; bind, ESP, locate object, strength; infravision, secret page, suggestion, tongues; detect scrying, extension I, minor creation, wizard eye; extension II, fabricate, feeblemind, telekinesis; true seeing.*

City militia (30): AL any non-evil; AC 7; MV 9; F2-F4; hp 11 (×10), 17 (×10), 22 (×10); THAC0 17-19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 11; ring mail, short sword, short bow, dagger.

2. City Militia Barricade. The city militia barricades are sturdy, well-engineered constructions running from building to building across the street. The center of the barricade is a large wagon that is pushed into position or pulled out of the way when the barricade is opened or closed.

Because business in the city is at a standstill, the barricades usually remain closed most of the day. They open to give entry to refugees from lawless or burning quarters of the city. (See the "City Encounter Table" for details on death carts and refugees.)

The barricades' primary purpose is to keep out roving bands of crazies and bandits. (See the "City Encounter

Table" for both.) Because trained soldiers are rare, the barricades are manned by three **militiamen** (F2, hp 11 each, see area 1 for complete statistics) backed by a larger contingent of citizen-soldiers. The citizen-soldiers are local residents who help by taking a turn of duty on the barricades.

Citizen-soldiers (4-16): AL LN or any good; AC 9; MV 12; 0-level humans; hp 4; THAC0 22 (non-proficient); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 7; shield, long bow, club, dagger. The citizen-soldiers have been armed but are not proficient with their weapons.

The barricade guards are trained and use a variety of decent-quality standard equipment. The citizen-soldiers are untrained and poorly equipped. A typical citizen-soldier's shield is a large barrel lid with a bit of rope nailed to it for a handle. Long bows are primarily hunting bows, and clubs are anything from old table legs to pieces of iron pipe.

3. Cooper's Copper.

The PCs have found Caper Street as directed by Zeeker Olm, but have yet to find Cooper's Copper. The DM may place this encounter in one of the smaller buildings of Tile A.

> You are in a debris-strewn area. Apparently, rioters have recently looted many of the shops. They have also torn down most of the signs in the neighborhood, so it is impossible to tell which of the shattered stores might be Cooper's Copper. As you move slowly up the street, you hear someone swearing loudly and with abandon. As you draw near the area of the swearing, the voice suddenly stops. You can tell which building it came from, but you see no one. The interior of the building is a shambles of debris, and the type of shop it was—or even if it was a shop—is uncertain.

If the PCs call out that they are here to help, they hear a muffled "Go away!" from beneath the floorboards. If the PCs once again offer assistance, the person beneath the floorboards apparently stands on something to put his mouth close to a knothole in the floor, and a shouted conversation can now take place. The man in the cellar identifies himself as Karl Cooper, owner of Cooper's Copper, and informs the PCs that they are trespassing in his showroom.

It was Karl whom the PCs heard swearing moments earlier. He had come up through the trapdoor from his cellar to survey the ruins of his shop. Karl will not come out no matter how much the PCs coax or what promises they make. He fears the bandits and looters, and comes out only when he is sure no one is near. In addition, Karl double-locked and double-barred the trapdoor from below. The PCs must chop through the trapdoor or floor if they wish to see Karl face to face (DM's option how long this takes).

Karl stands on a ladder in the cellar to converse with PCs. His hearing has degenerated from years of clanging on copper pots; this deficiency is aggravated by attempting to hold a discussion through a small knothole in the floor. Karl's answers to the PCs' shouted questions are "What was that?" or "Speak up. I can't hear you." Sometimes, Karl's only response is muffled and unintelligible. If the PCs eventually make their need for a copper double boiler understood, they learn the following:

> "What, a double boiler? How can you think of cooking at a time like this? You can see my shop's been near cleaned out! I had a solid copper steam-driven double boiler in here a few months back, before the fever came. It was of good gnomish make, and I sold it to Twilly Winkleman, the cook at the East Gate Inn. What'd you say? Why it's near the east gate, you fool! Where do you think the East Gate Inn would be?
>
> "Wait a minute! I just remembered! Twilly said something about buying the double boiler for an orphanage, someplace called The Hearth. I don't know exactly where it is, but it's probably somewhere near the East Gate Inn."

All this shouting back and forth draws unwelcome attention to the shop. For every round the PCs are engaged in shouted conversation, there is a cumulative 5% chance of attracting the attention of a bandit gang. The bandits arrive in 1-4 rounds after hearing the shouts, to attack and rob anyone they find.

Karl Cooper: AL LN; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 7; club, dagger.

Bandits (2d6+12): AL any evil; AC 7; MV 9; F2; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 9; XP 35; studded leather armor, short sword, dagger.

4. Jade's Alchemical Shop. This small wooden building is wedged between two larger ones. Its single story contains a display area, a laboratory, and a storage room.

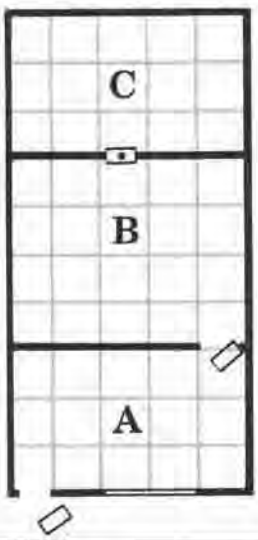
> As you approach Jade's Alchemical Shop, you realize it is being looted. The front window is shattered, and people are climbing in and out over the shards of glass. Several of the looters disappear around the corner or into nearby buildings, clutching unidentifiable booty and potion bottles. Many more are still in the shop, fighting each other over what is left.
>
> With a rending screech, the door of the shop comes loose from its hinges, then falls into the street with a loud crash. Several of the looters spring out through the open portal and run down the street, openly waving their stolen property. One looter stops near you and, before you can react, lifts two potion bottles to his lips and downs their contents. The looter screams, clutches his stomach, and begins rolling and thrashing wildly in the debris-strewn street.

A false rumor has spread through the neighborhood that a potion of *healing* cures goblin fever. This excited local residents into breaking into the alchemical shop in hopes of a cure. Some of the less-than-honest citizens are using the rumor as an excuse to rob and steal. Luckily, neither the shop owner nor her guards and assistants were at the store when the looters broke in, or bloodshed would have been a certainty. The lack of assistants poses a problem for the looters. None of the containers are marked (at least not with any runes the common person can read), so the looters have no way of knowing what they are imbibing.

The looter drinking the two potions and collapsing is 20' away from the PCs. The two potions are incompatible, so the unfortunate looter will explode in 1-4 rounds (see page 141 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). Everyone in a 5' radius of the looter takes 1-10 hp damage from the explosion.

Jade's Alchemical Shop Area 4

1 square = 5'



The 22 looters inside the shop are a disorganized mob, busily fighting among themselves over the remaining goods. The looters are making a tremendous amount of noise shouting, fighting, and wrecking the establishment.

Looters (22): AL any; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 8; XP 15; club, dagger, or knife.

If ordered to leave by a strong, organized force such as the PCs, the looters abandon their booty and the shop without a fight. However, the PCs must first attract the attention of the mob, which is difficult considering the amount of noise they are making. If the PCs enter the shop while the looters remain inside, they must fight the looters to gain control of the building.

If the PC party intimidates the looters into abandoning the shop without a fight, give each party member a 250-XP reward. If the party wins the shop through battle, the DM should award no experience points. (The battle is no contest for the PCs, as the looters fight singly or in pairs while the rest continue to ransack the shop.) Pursuit of fleeing looters is futile. The PCs have no chance of catching them, as they quickly disappear into nearby buildings or down alleyways.

4A. Display Area.

> The display area is a shambles. What can be broken has been broken, and what can't be broken has been bent, battered, and beaten into useless junk. Slivers of glass and shards of earthenware and ceramic vessels are everywhere. If the powdered dragon's tooth was here, it is now gone or polluted with the other substances littering the floor.
>
> The door in the wall facing the entrance hangs precariously from one hinge. Through the portal drifts a rank-smelling blue haze.

4B. Laboratory. The broken doorway leads to a laboratory and work area. Like the display room (area 4A), the laboratory is littered with broken glass, shattered containers, and their spilled contents. Chemicals and arcane substances are mixing and blending in uncontrolled reactions on the floor.

> This room is filled with hazy blue smoke, and the air smells of someone long overdue for a bath. The floor is covered with colorful dusts and powders, over which run rivulets of unknown liquids. From here and there comes a venomous hiss or the gurgling of a noisome, bubbly glop. The bluish vapor seems to be coming from the same area of the floor as the hissing sound and the awful smell.
>
> On the wall facing the broken door is a double-locked iron-shod door. The looters have hammered off one lock, but the other looks untouched.

The chemicals mixing on the floor are creating dangerous gases and vapors, which will have deleterious effects if they come in contact with the PCs' skin. Each PC who enters the room must make a saving throw vs. poison every turn. PCs who fail their saving throws each take 1-4 hp damage from the poisonous vapors and lose one point of Dexterity. If Dexterity drops below 3, the PC is unable to walk and must be helped from the room. If Dexterity drops to 0, the PC dies. If the PCs survive the gases, Dexterity points return at a rate of one point per day.

The vapors act as contact poisons and need not be breathed to take effect. For the vapors to have any effect, the PC must be fully in area 4B. The gases are immediately rendered inert when mixed with cleaner air (even standing in the door of the room is protection against their effects). Spells such as *gust of wind* work normally and clear the room of the dangerous vapors for the spell's duration.

PCs attempting to flush out the room with water cause more harm than good. Water reacts with the chemicals in much the same way as the unidentified liquids and goo on the floor do. If the PCs flush the room with water (either buckets of well water or a *create water* spell), they wash the chemicals into the display area (area 4A). PCs must then make saving throws vs. poison in both areas 4A and 4B.

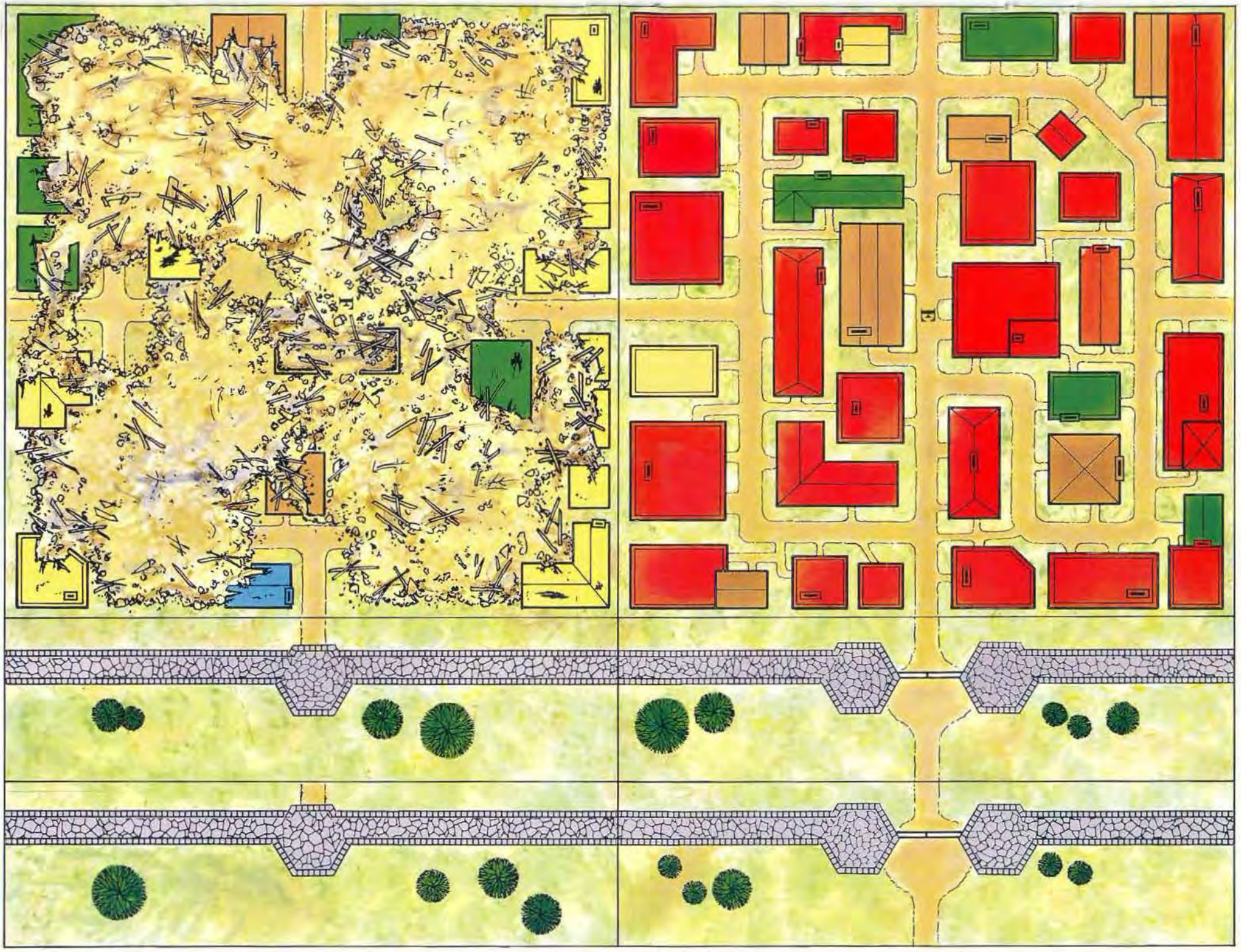
If the PCs survive the gases and attempt the door, they find the lock can be picked normally by a thief, forced physically, or opened with a *knock* spell. If forced, the PCs hit the door automatically, but it is solid and takes 25 hp damage (piercing weapons do half damage) before opening.

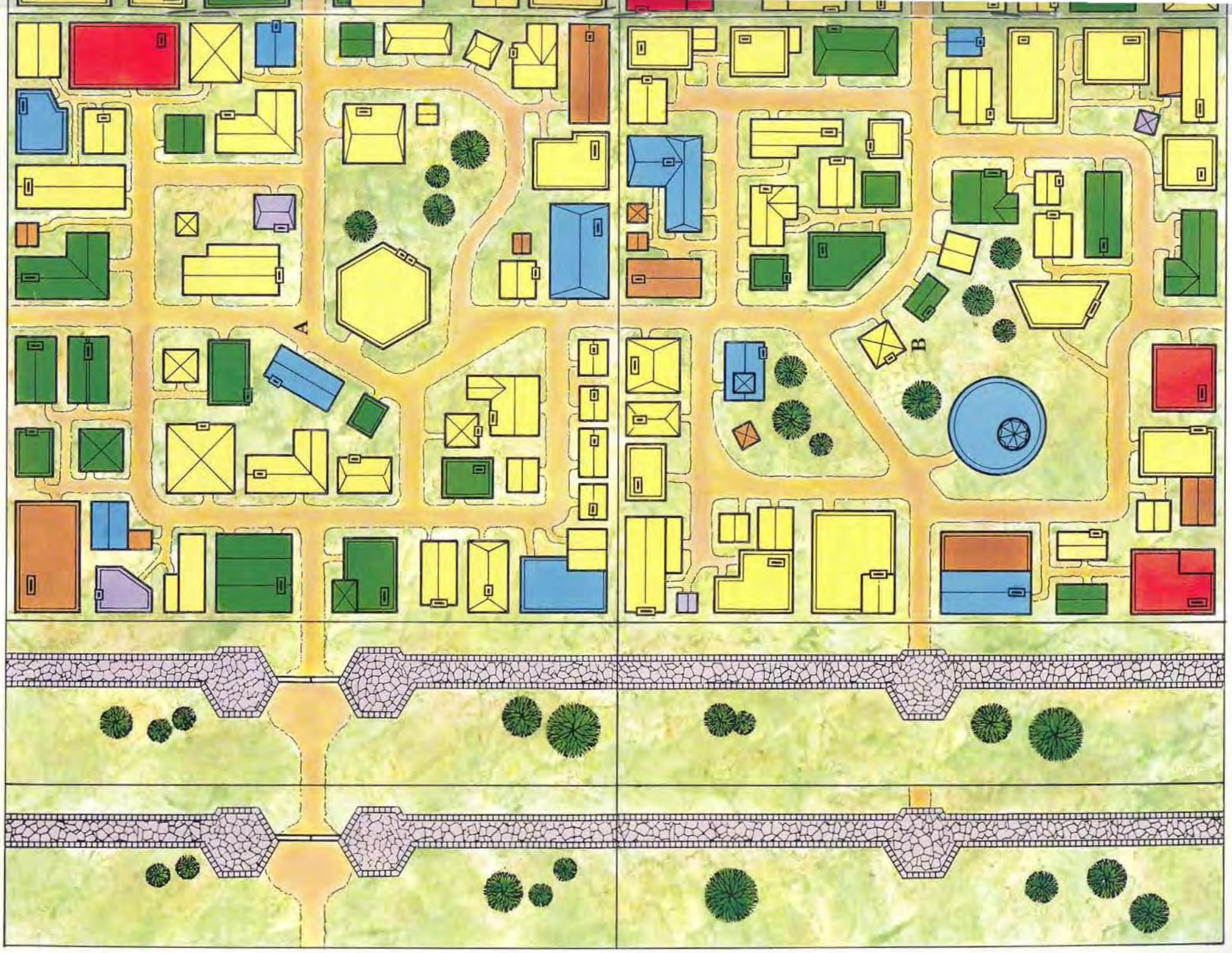
4C. Storage.

> The walls in this room are covered with shelves from floor to ceiling, and several large shelf units have been fitted in the center of the room. The shelves are filled with every type of beaker, bottle, jar, jug, and vessel imaginable. All are carefully sealed, but none carries the slightest hint of a letter, rune, mark, or glyph to denote its contents.

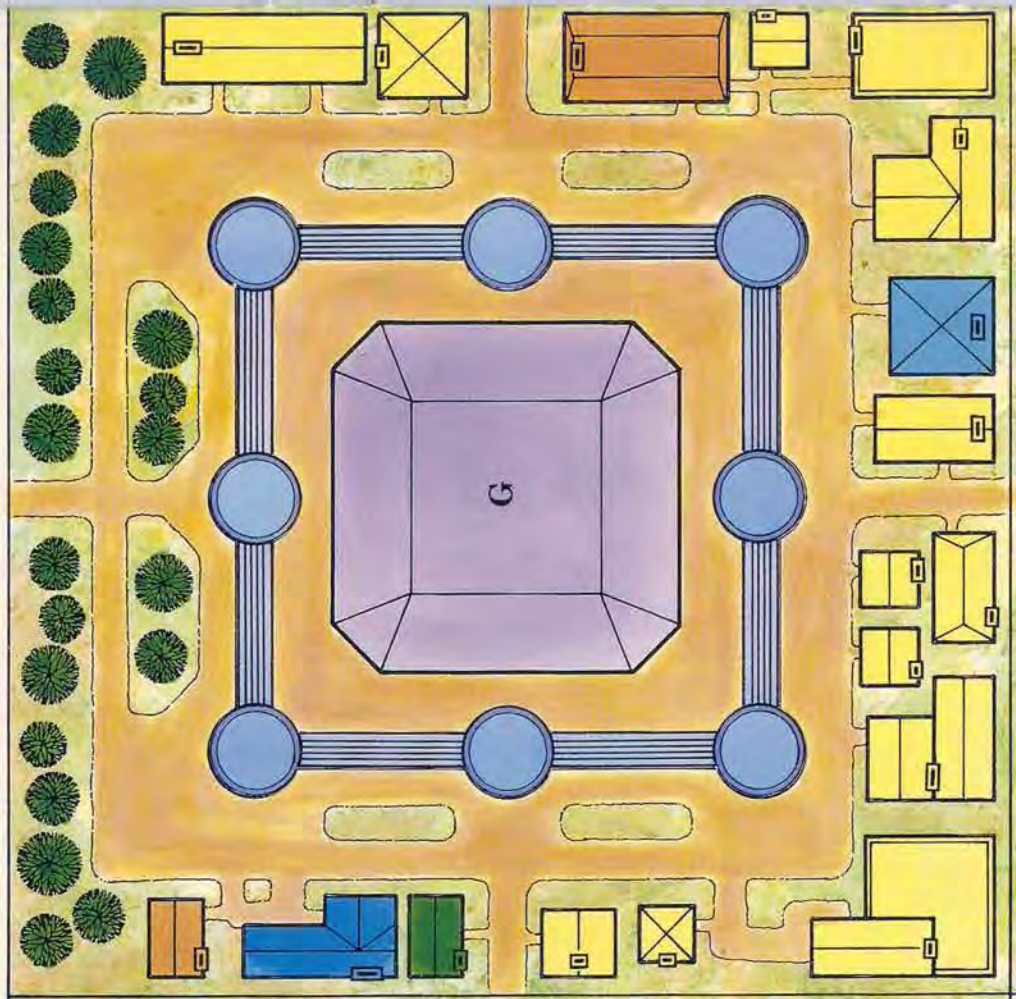
The containers are marked with magical writing that can be read only by a *read magic* spell. The arrangement of the chemicals on the shelves is not simple alphabetical order but a complex and intricate system used by alchemists. Even with a *read magic* spell, it requires 2-8 hours of careful searching to find the "Powdered Dragon's Tooth" label. A PC wizard with spellcraft proficiency can reduce the search time to 2-12 rounds on a successful check. (Imagine how long it would take to find a particular book in a library using the card catalog in comparison with how long it would take to read every book title until you find the right one.)

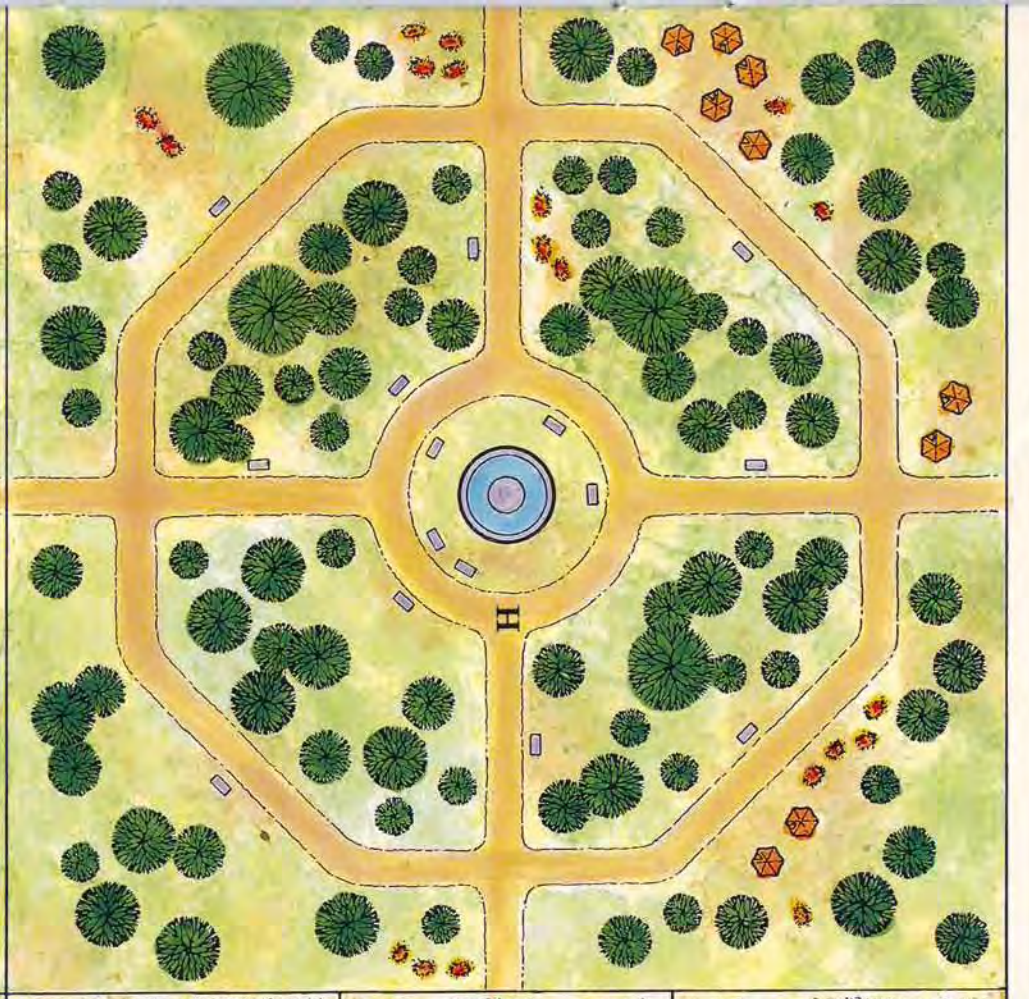
Opening containers to view their contents is useless, and sometimes dan-

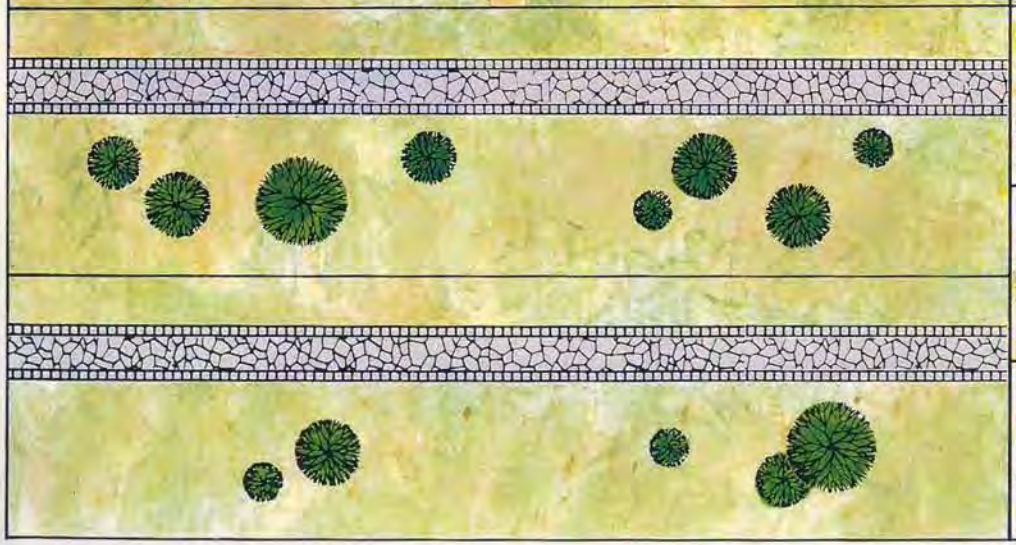


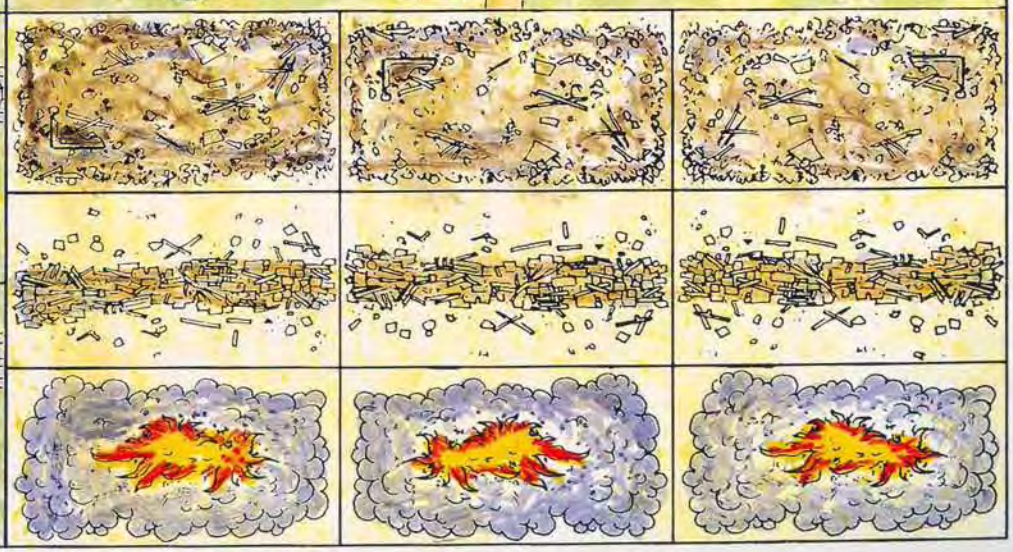

A
B

D
C


G


H





gerous. There is a 10% chance per container opened of releasing a dangerous substance with the same effect as the gases in the laboratory (area 4B).

The powder that the PCs seek is in a small, well-sealed earthenware jar that may be carried in a backpack or small sack.

5. Vigilantes. This encounter is best played at night. It can be used during the day but loses some of its nightmarish quality.

> You are moving down a rough but litter-free cobblestone street. The air holds a bitter, smoky tang, and there is a sense of expectancy in the air. The back of your neck tingles as if unfriendly eyes were watching you from the shuttered windows and dark doorways.
>
> Rounding a corner, you are faced with a terrible sight: a large bonfire lights four unfortunate souls, recently hanged. Their hooded corpses dangle obscenely from the sheltering boughs of a large oak. Apparently, someone in the neighborhood is summarily executing people. Even as you ponder this disheartening thought, a cry goes up behind you. "There they are!"
>
> A large number of people are running toward you. In the flicker and sway of their torches, you catch glimpses of angry, distorted faces and a gray-and-black banner. The area seems alive with shouting, and the torches swarm like angry bees. Suddenly, the bonfire sends up a huge belch of smoke, and a great shower of sparks and flaming cinders rains down on the onrushing mob. Shrouded in smoke and pelted by glowing coals, the mob looks like some loathsome, nightmare horde unleashed through the gates of hell.

The PCs are in an area controlled by vigilantes calling themselves the "Order of the Gray and Black," who hunt down and execute without mercy anyone they feel is responsible for the plague. The victims hanging from the oak were refugees from a burned neighborhood who had the misfortune to stumble into the vigilantes' area around sunset the day before.

The PC party is confronted by 25 vigilantes. However, because of the darkness and the fact that many vigilantes carry two torches, it is impossible to tell exactly how many people are pursuing them.

Vigilantes (25): AL any evil; AC 8; MV 12; F1; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 9; XP 15; leather armor, flask of oil, club, dagger.

The vigilantes pursue for as long as the PCs are in sight. If the PCs elude them, the mob continues searching for 1-4 turns before returning to the hanging oak. Attempting to hide in buildings to escape the vigilantes is not a good idea, as they burn any building they suspect harbors the PCs. The vigilantes do not negotiate except to buy time or trick someone into surrendering. Any PCs captured by the "Order" must be quickly rescued or face a grisly fate at the oak tree. The PCs are pursued every time they enter this area.

6. The People's Court.

> This neighborhood has suffered greatly from unchecked fires. Many of the buildings have been reduced to nothing more than blackened piles of rubble while those structures still standing are burned out shells. A smoky haze fills your nostrils with a bitter stench. You occasionally see someone picking through the rubble of a building. As you travel further into the destruction, the area seems more and more deserted. Suddenly, a great cheer goes up, as if many people were loudly approving something. The noise comes from behind a particularly large heap of debris.

If the PCs investigate the cheering, they come upon a remarkable sight. As they skirt the large pile of rubble, the adventurers see a pleasant garden. This beer garden is all that remains of a tavern, now reduced to charred debris. The garden is an unexpected but pleasant oasis in these fire-scarred surroundings.

> Under the boughs of three large trees, some 30 people are seated. They all face the same direction and seem intent on the bizarre spectacle before them. At the front of the assembly, a man in a voluminous red robe is seated at a large table. To his right stands a man wearing a black hood and robe and holding a large

axe. On the left, a man wearing a white blindfold and robe holds a sword. A woman, guarded by two other men, kneels in front of the table. She is gagged, and bound hand and foot. Each of the men beside her restrains a large dog on a short leash. You notice that several other men in the garden also have dogs.

The man in the red robe seems to be pondering something while his two companions fidget and finger their weapons. He shuts his eyes for a moment as if deep in thought, then stares directly at the prisoner, saying, "So you claim you did not burn our buildings. Why?" The woman is gagged and cannot possibly answer.

The red-robed judge holds up his hand and shouts "Silence! I've heard enough. What does the prosecution say?"

The black-hooded man with the axe whinnies several times like a horse and then spins around on his heel three times.

"Well said, Mr. Prosecutor!" the judge responds. "What does the defense have to say?"

The blindfolded man bangs his sword on the table and barks loudly like a dog. The guard dogs of the court bailiffs answer him with a louder clamor of their own.

The judge responds with "Point well taken, but leniency in such cases only breeds more havoc. We can't have people burning buildings as they please. What does the Executioner say?"

The black-hooded gentleman raises his axe and cries loudly, "Off with her head!"

The judge then turns to his other companion. "What does the Sword of Justice say?

The blindfolded man shouts "So be it!"

The judge then solemnly intones, "So be it and be it so. I do hereby duly swear and state you have justly been found guilty of the crime of arson and are sentenced to die by beheading. Sentence to be carried out immediately."

The judge rises and shouts into the ear of the black-hooded man, "Executioner! You have a task before you!" Turning, he shouts in the ear of the blindfolded man. "Sword of Justice! You must witness the execution!"

This kangaroo court would be almost comical except for the terrible seriousness of the sentence. Whatever madness is happening here has gotten completely out of hand. The poor woman before the table is ashen faced with terror. The onlookers are either enjoying the spectacle or disinterested in the woman's fate.

As the PCs watch, the black-hooded executioner prepares to carry out the sentence, and the blindfolded Sword of Justice is led to a position where he can "witness" the execution. The judge remains standing at the table. If the PCs do not intervene, the woman is executed and the court and crowd disperse.

If the PCs attempt to stop the execution, the judge shouts loudly for the six bailiffs and crowd of 30 onlookers to attack. The onlookers obey halfheartedly. They have low morale and, if the judge falls, they give up the fight and disperse. It is impossible to surrender to or negotiate with the bailiffs or the mob.

Onlookers (30): AL any; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 3 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 6; XP 15; club or dagger.

Bailiffs (6): AL CE; AC 7; MV 9; F3; hp 23, 17, 16, 15, 13, 11; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 11; XP 65; ring mail, short sword, dagger.

The bailiffs do not have goblin fever but are completely evil and uncaring. They serve only the judge, Danag Z'al. They were once Danag's personal guards and now serve as his court bailiffs. The bailiffs care little what games Danag wishes to play so long as they are paid. If Danag wants to be a judge and hand down death sentences, they are unconcerned, so long as the city is in chaos and they are not held accountable for their actions. If captured, each claims he served Danag because he was *charmed* or otherwise magically enslaved. If Danag is killed or captured, the bailiffs attempt to disperse and disappear with the onlookers. The bailiffs take no prisoners and negotiate only to gain the upper hand.

Each bailiff controls a large guard dog. The dogs are well trained; unless spells or magical items are employed, they obey no one but the bailiffs.

Guard dogs (6): INT semi; AL N; AC 6; MV 12; HD 2+2; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SZ M; ML 9; XP 65; MM/57 (Dog, War Dog).

Nicka Thyme (prisoner): AL NG; AC 10; MV 12; F2; hp 10; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 9.

The prisoner is the daughter of a local spice merchant. If freed, Nicka snatches up a club and immediately joins the battle on the PCs' side. If the PCs rescue the woman and take her to a place of relative safety, they are rewarded with 1,000 gp by her family (the DM may delay this payment until the crisis in the city has been resolved) and 200 XP each. Also, at the DM's discretion, Nicka may join the party as an NPC.

The **Executioner** (hp 3) and **Sword of Justice** (hp 2) do not fight under any circumstances. They immediately throw down their arms and surrender if confronted or attacked. The Executioner is nothing but a skinny old man with no combat skills, and the Sword of Justice is not only blindfolded but truly blind (having lost his sight in an explosion).

These two are far gone into the dementia caused by goblin fever. They serve Danag Z'al out of fear and fever. They fear being tried before him if they do not cooperate, and the fever robs them of the ability to find a way out of the situation.

If questioned, the two reveal that they once owned the tavern and beer garden. They know little of the man acting as judge, only that he is a wizard of some kind, and that he appeared two or three days ago. The judge promptly appointed them court officials and began holding trials. So far, 10 people have been executed for one thing or another.

Danag Z'al (judge): AL CE; AC 7; MV 12; M15; hp 28 (37 if cured of goblin fever); THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; I 9 (I 17 if cured of goblin fever); ML 11; XP 7,000; staff, *wand of paralyzation* (12 charges), *ring of protection +1, cloak of displacement.*

Spells: *charm person, phantasmal force, shield, unseen servant; ESP, knock, web; flame arrow, haste, protection from normal missiles; confusion.*

The judge is a powerful evil wizard who is afflicted with goblin fever and no longer remembers his real name. His house was destroyed by fire, so Danag wanders the city holding unauthorized trials. He truly believes he is a judge appointed by the city. Danag is fixated on the idea, and there is no way to dissuade him unless he is cured of the fever.

His affliction limits the wizard's ability to use spells. He can no longer cast

spells beyond fourth level or learn the complete number of lower-level spells due a 15th-level wizard. He cannot memorize more spells once he has cast those he currently knows because, in his fevered state, he has lost the *Leomund's secret chest* containing his spell books.

Though fevered, Danag Z'al has not completely lost his wits and is still a dangerous opponent. He wears his magical cloak under his red judge's robes. If confronted, he immediately sheds the red robe and attacks. In combat, the wizard uses his magical items and spells to the best advantage. If captured, the judge can tell PCs nothing useful. Reality and delusions have become so interwoven in Danag's mind that separating the two is impossible.

7. East Gate Inn. This encounter works best if the PCs are traveling at night or under a heavy pall of smoke. They are on a street ruled by a ruthless and violent gang known as the Bravos, who for years have ruled the area through intimidation. Now, with the plague shutting down the businesses they once milked for extortion and protection money, the Bravos have turned to murder and banditry. They are currently using the East Gate Inn as their headquarters.

> The street is very dark, and the great silhouettes of buildings loom suddenly, then fade as you walk past. For a change, there are no burning buildings nearby to light your way.
>
> As you move down the street, you can barely make out the shape of a signpost in front of a building that seems to have escaped any fire damage. Moving closer, until your nose nearly touches the wood of the sign, you see it proudly proclaims "East Gate Inn." Beneath this the sign boasts "Best Roast Mutton in Town." The inn is dark, however. Its shutters are closed, and not a speck of light shows from any window or door.

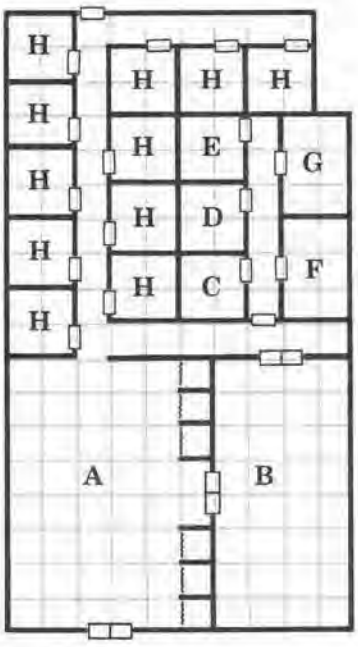
The Bravos closed and locked the building's shutters, and boarded up the windows from the inside. The only ways in or out are the front and back doors.

Three gang members are posted on the roof as lookouts and snipers (see elite Bravo, area 7A, for details). If the PCs are carrying a light source, the lookouts automatically spot them first and warn the gang. If the PCs approach the inn cautiously and attempt to stay hidden, they spot the lookouts first (the lookouts are moving about and talking).

To surprise the gang, the PCs must silence the lookouts on the roof or approach unseen. If the PCs have used *invisibility, phantasmal force,* or other methods to elude detection and surprise the gang, the roof guards take one turn to come down and join the battle. As fights are common among gang members, the guards assume that any battle breaking out beneath them is an internal matter, and do not rush to investigate.

East Gate Inn Area 7

1 square = 10'



7A. Dining Hall. The inn's large dining room is filled with long tables and accompanying benches. Six private dining cubicles are framed by heavy timbers and the kitchen wall. If the lookouts give warning of the PCs' approach, 10 Bravos hide behind overturned tables, and the remainder hide in the private dining areas. If surprised, the gang is lounging about the room, eating, drinking, and gambling. There are 12 gang soldiers and eight elite members in the dining hall. The leader, a loud-mouthed ruffian named Swanky, is also here.

Swanky: AL LE; AC 4; MV 9; F4; hp 22; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 18/90 (+2/+4); ML 14; XP 175; chain mail, shield, scimitar (specialized), dagger.

Elite Bravo (8): AL any evil; AC 7; MV 9; F2; hp 15, 14, 12, 11, 10, 9 (×2), 7; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 14; XP 65; studded leather armor, short bow, short sword, dagger.

Bravo soldier (12): AL any evil; AC 8; MV 12; F1; hp 5 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 11; XP 15; leather armor, short sword, dagger.

The Bravos fight with an "every man for himself" attitude and do not use a great deal of strategy other than setting up an ambush. The gang takes no prisoners but will negotiate to buy time or deceive victims into surrendering. Swanky rules through strength of arms, not charisma or natural leadership ability. Swanky's death or capture has little effect on the gang's morale. Each Bravo carries his own share of the spoils. If the PCs search any captured or killed gang member, they find 10-100 gp in mixed coins; 25% of the gang members have a gem or piece of jewelry

worth another 10-100 gp.

If questioned, captured gang members know nothing. They have never heard of Twilly Winkleman or a double boiler. Each Bravo claims to be a mere pawn, following Swanky's orders out of fear. If magical means of determining the truth are used, the PCs find that most gang members truly do know nothing.

Some of the Bravos will admit to taking copper cooking implements from the kitchen and selling them. (The PCs can learn from the Winklemans in area 7C-7G that Twilly never brought the double boiler to the inn, so any copper implements sold by the Bravos could not be the item that the PCs are looking for.) Swanky knows nothing about a double boiler but knows that the people locked in areas 7C-7G are named Winkleman.

7B. Kitchen. This large room is a combined kitchen, scullery, and storage area. The inn is situated near many bakeries, meat, produce, and dairy markets and did not store much food on the premises. Before the plague, food was delivered fresh from the markets each day. The kitchen did hold a huge barrel of good beer, several kegs of wine, and a cask of rum, but the Bravos drained every drop the first day they arrived. The gang has also eaten every scrap of food in the place.

The kitchen contains one large oven and a stove. Innumerable pots, pans, kettles, ladles, skewers, and forks once hung from hooks on the rafters but, after the gang took over, most of the copper implements "disappeared," along with the larger and sharper knives. Several crates of cheap earthenware mugs and plates stand in one corner, while an enormous iron kettle sits over a fire pit in another. The kettle holds only cold, scummy water and is apparently used to clean dishes. A careful search of the kitchen reveals it holds nothing that could remotely be called a double boiler (see area 8D for a description of this item).

7C-7G. Family Quarters. The Winkleman family rooms are similar to the inn guest rooms (area 7H), but slightly larger and furnished with a number of personal items. Area 7C is the bedroom of Willy and Jilly Winkleman, owners of the inn and parents of Twilly (see area 8D) and his 11 year-old brother Billy (bedrooms 7D and 7E respectively). The family entertains guests in a small parlor (area 7F), and eats in its own dining room (area 7G). The gang has gone through these rooms and removed any valuables and weapons.

Willy, Jilly, and **Billy Winkleman:** AL LN; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 4, 3, 2; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 7.

The Winklemans have been kept alive to cook and serve at the gang's beck and call. If they are rescued, give the PCs an additional 300-XP bonus each. The Winklemans are grateful for any help, but will not join the party or attempt to leave the inn. If asked about Karl Cooper's statement that Twilly Winkleman bought a copper double boiler (see area 3), the family confirms that Twilly Winkleman did indeed reside at the inn, but they know nothing about the boiler. If asked about Twilly, the family states he contracted goblin fever and is running amuck with a pack of dogs. Willy says:

> "I never saw anything like it. He went wild. He took down the elk head from the dining room and cut it up. Next thing I know, he's running around buck naked, waving a spear and wearing elk antlers on his head. He looks like the damnedest Tom-fool you've ever seen. He's got a pack of dogs around him, so watch yourselves. Young Twilly's a cleric and can call the animals if need be.
>
> "I did hear him say something about the orphanage needing a some contraption for making soft foods for the babies to eat. It'd be just like him to have gone off and bought them one.
>
> "We'd take it as a kindness and act of friendship if you'd do something for Twilly. Can you bring my son home? I'd at least like to lock him in a room or tie him in the cellar. He's going to get killed if he keeps running wild through the streets like that."

Willy can draw a rough map of the area where Twilly might be found and where The Hearth is located (see area 8). Willy is not a cleric and cannot tell the PCs exactly what powers or spells Twilly has. If the PCs give the Winklemans the money found on the gang members as reparation for damages caused by the gang, Willy offers them free room and board at the East Gate Inn whenever they wish. If the PCs keep the money, the innkeeper and his family are grateful for their rescue but, due to their present circumstances, offer no reward.

If the PCs find Twilly and return him to the inn (cured or not), the family is overjoyed and the PCs are given free room and board whenever they stay at the inn (if this has already been given, the family can do little more).

7H. Guest Rooms. The inn's guest rooms are identical and are being used by gang members. Each room contains two beds, a table and four chairs, a wardrobe, a pitcher and wash basin, and a trunk containing extra blankets. The Bravos have stolen any valuable or useful items that once furnished the rooms. While never luxurious, the rooms now offer only the essential comforts and amenities. There are currently four **Bravo soldiers** (hp 5 each) and two **elite Bravos** (hp 9 each; see area 7A for details) asleep in these rooms. If a battle erupts anywhere in the inn, it must last one turn before they investigate the noise.

8. The Gantlet. The Gantlet is an area given over wholly to chaos and crime (see map for encounter locations). The DM need not roll on the "City Encounter Table" while the PCs are in this neighborhood. After passing through, the PCs may truly feel they have "run the gantlet."

8A. Fires. Read the following at any time the PCs attempt to pass through this area:

> The buildings on both sides of the street are burning wildly. The heat between these two fire-engulfed structures is intense but not impassable. The roaring of the fires makes it impossible to hear even shouted conversation. A great cloud of bitter smoke billows into the street and then shoots straight upward, borne on the heat.

Any PC passing through the heat unprotected by a spell or a magical item, takes 1-8 hp burn damage. PCs covering themselves with wet blankets, wet canvas, or other water-soaked covering reduce the damage to 1-4 hp scald damage. The covering must be soaked in water or other nonflammable liquid to reduce heat damage.

In addition, items or equipment carried or attached to the PC must save vs. normal fire (see *DMG*, page 39). If the

item is protected by a wet blanket or the like, it gains a +4 on the saving throw. Items such as oils, paper, and potions are ruined if they fail the saving throw (burned, boiled, or overheated). Items such as cloth, leather, rope, or wood are still usable but are scorched, yellowed, or discolored in some way if they fail the saving throw. Bone, crystal, glass, metal items, and pottery are unharmed if they fail the saving throw, but are too hot to handle without thick gloves (1-4 hp burn damage).

8B. Snipers. The Bravos (see area 7 for details) have positioned themselves on rooftops, in high windows, and in fortified ground-floor posts so they can waylay and rob anyone venturing into the neighborhood. Unless the PCs are prepared, the snipers surprise the party on a roll of 1-8 on 1d10. If the PCs are looking for snipers, they are surprised on a 1-4 on 1d10.

Snipers (2-8): AL NE; AC 7 (−3 under cover); MV 12; F2; hp 11 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 12; XP 120; leather armor, shield, heavy crossbow (30%) or light crossbow (70%), short sword, dagger.

The snipers fire on anyone coming within range. Victims are immediately stripped of all valuables and thrown into a cellar to avoid alerting others wandering in the area. If a victim is wounded, the snipers pursue for 1-10 rounds or until their quarry is out of sight. The snipers do not negotiate or take prisoners.

If the PCs return fire, the snipers have 90% cover (−10 to armor class; see the *DMG*, page 62). If the PCs assault a sniper nest, determine the type and height of the building occupied by referring to "Buildings and Structures" on page 30. Then roll 1d6 to determine the sniper's location: 1-2 = ground floor, 3-4 = high windows, 5-6 = rooftop. In some cases, the PCs may have to fight their way to a sniper nest through other defenders of the building.

Each sniper nest is a 20' × 20' square with arrow slits knocked or hacked through the walls and a single barred door. The door can be hit automatically each round but takes 40 hp damage before opening. If the nest is breached, the snipers flee rather than fight.

8C. The Wild Hunt. If the PCs rescued the Winklemans from the East Gate Inn, they should be anticipating the following encounter. If the PCs have not yet found the East Gate Inn, the approach of the wild hunt may come as a surprise. This encounter can occur anywhere in the tile, and the DM may move the location as needed.

> As you walk down the street, you hear a sudden clear horn call and the barking of many dogs. As you approach the next street, you are confronted with a wild and marvelous sight. A pack of dogs comes pelting around the corner, followed closely by a naked man who carries a spear in one hand and a horn in the other. He appears to have antlers growing out of his head. The man and the pack of dogs completely ignore you as they dash by in barking, panting, horn-blowing confusion and disappear into the darkness.

The PCs have just encountered the wild hunt of Celtic legend. It is not the real wild hunt, but the best imitation that the goblin-fevered mind of Twilly Winkleman can muster. Twilly believes he is Master of the Hunt, and has collected a pack from local stray dogs. He and the pack chase up and down the

street after imaginary quarry and ignore virtually everyone else. The Master and the pack attack only if attacked themselves. The wild hunt pack consists of 10 wild dogs (see below) and six **war dogs** (hp 11 each, area 6 for complete statistics).

Wild dogs (10): INT semi; AL N; AC 7; MV 15; HD 1+1; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; SZ S; ML 6; XP 35; MM/57 (Dog).

Twilly Winkleman, Master of the Hunt: AL LN; AC 10; MV 12; C3; hp 10 (14 if cured of goblin fever); THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; ML 18; spear. Spell: *animal friendship.*

Twilly has goblin fever and has passed into a dangerous delirium where the line between fantasy and reality is blurred. Twilly used *animal friendship* and *speak with animals* spells to gather, control, and direct the dog pack. However, in his deteriorating condition, he can now cast only a single spell. The dogs are ferociously protective of Twilly and, in turn, Twilly is protective of his dogs. Any attack on the pack brings him to their aid.

Twilly scalped the old elk head that once hung in the dining room of the East Gate Inn and contrived a well-made, close-fitting headdress of the antlers. He stole the spear and horn from a shop, and gallops about stark naked. The snipers (area 8B) leave Twilly alone. They know he has no money, and he sometimes accidentally chases someone into their line of fire. The snipers find the naked man hysterically funny, so they yell and cheer as the Master and his pack run past.

If the PCs wish to talk to Twilly, they must either subdue or kill the dogs (this enrages Twilly, and the PCs may be forced to kill him as well). As the dogs travel in a close-knit pack, they may be subdued using *ray of enfeeblement, sleep, scare,* or *web* spells or the priest spells *animal friendship, invisibility to animals, charm person or mammal,* or *speak with animals.* If the animals are subdued, Twilly tries to rouse or free the animals rather than attack the PCs.

If the PCs can subdue or gain the trust of the dogs, they may get near enough to speak to Twilly, but unless magic is used, he won't answer any questions. He constantly runs this way and that, blowing loudly on his horn, chasing after figments of his fevered imagination.

If the PCs want any answers from Twilly, he must be captured and magic used to gather his far-flung, fevered thoughts. An *ESP* spell is ineffective against him because his thoughts are a swirling confusion centered on the wild hunt. Spells like *aid, cure light wounds,* or *goodberry* reduce Twilly's fever so that he acts rationally for 2-8 turns. A *cure disease* spell cures Twilly of goblin fever, and he ceases to believe he is Master of the Wild Hunt.

If Twilly is cured and questioned, he can tell the PCs that he purchased a double boiler from Cooper's Copper and gave it to an orphanage called The Hearth. He even helped move it into the building's cellar. Twilly can directs PCs to The Hearth (area 8D), but he will not join the PC party. He is thankful to the PCs for curing him, but is too concerned for his family at the East Gate Inn (area 7) to join the PCs. If only temporarily sane, he soon returns to running madly about the streets with his dogs.

8D. The Hearth. The Hearth was a nondenominational orphanage run by a group called the Sisters of the Light. When the plague began sweeping through the city, the good sisters immediately packed up the children and left Waen Fawr for a safer haven somewhere in the countryside. Soon after their departure, the 150′ × 80′ two-story structure was gutted by fire.

> A charred sign that reads "The Hearth" hangs by one corner from the wreck of a large building. All that is left are the walls of the ground floor holding the collapsed, charred remains of the upper story. Searching through the debris proves useless; you find only burned and unidentifiable junk. However, as you clear away some of the soot, ash, and debris, you notice the floor is of thick earthenware tiles that have the slick look of exposure to great heat. You find nothing else of interest or use.

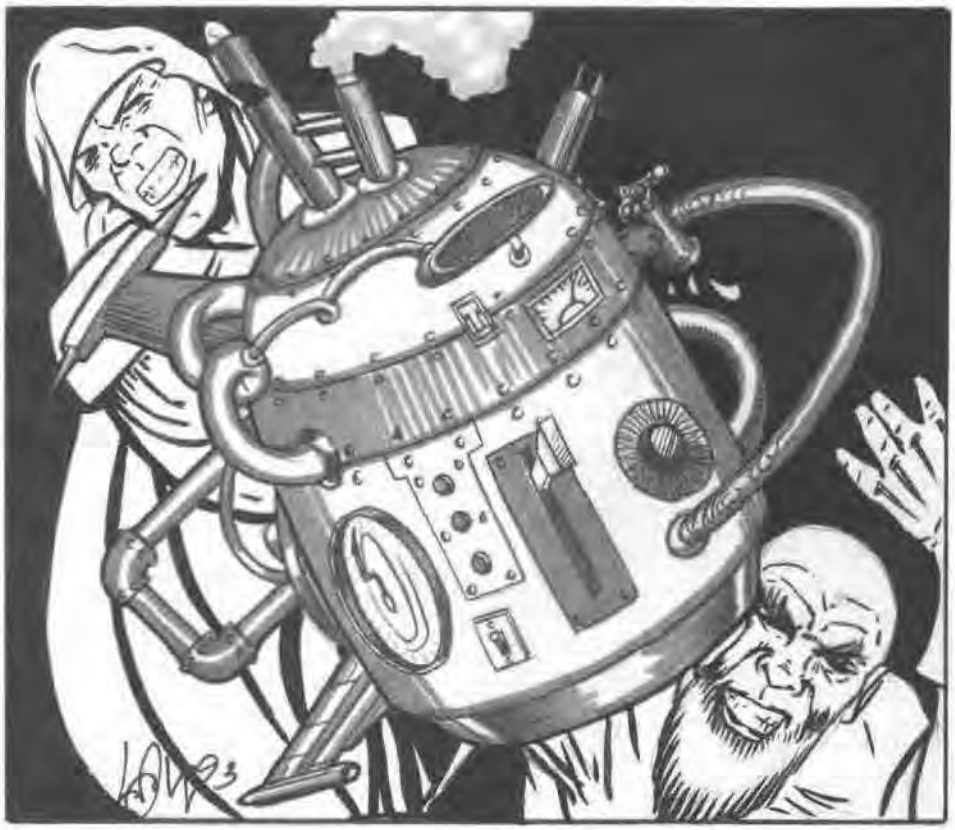
Unless the PCs have spoken to Twilly Winkleman (area 8C), they may not realize that The Hearth has a cellar. The cellar and its contents were protected from the fire by the thick tile floor. If the PCs continue to search the debris, there is a cumulative 10% chance per PC per turn to find the small trapdoor that opens onto the cellar stairs. The

Hearth's cellar is an 80' × 80' square that contains several trunks and chests full of children's clothes, boxes of toys, and a few crates of cheap earthenware dishes and eating utensils. If the PCs search through the goods, there is a cumulative 10% chance per PC per turn of finding the copper double boiler that they seek.

Against the southernmost wall, covered by a sheet but in pristine condition, sits a gnomish copper steam-driven adjustable double boiler, which the orphanage used to boil fruit and vegetables into mush for the babies to eat. It looks sort of like a whiskey still, with dials and steam vents and gnomish oddities of unknown purpose sticking out of the copper ball of the boiler. The main boiler is about 3½' in diameter; the gnomish tubing and other unrecognizable parts bring the dimensions to about 4½' wide. The device weighs about 100 lbs. and cannot be disassembled without damaging it. Its shape is so odd that it won't fit conveniently in any sack, bag, or box. If the PCs search the cellar, they find hammers, nails, and boards that they can use to build a platform on which two individuals can carry the boiler. No matter how it is moved, the boiler must always be turned and maneuvered carefully through doorways. If attacked, those carrying the boiler suffer −4 to Dexterity and −2 to armor class.

9. Cult of the Phoenix Barricade.

As you approach, you see a barricade built to be seriously defended. It's constructed of cobblestones pulled up from the street and large, heavy, oaken casks. There are no gates or openings in the blockade; apparently the only way past is to climb over. Makeshift flagpoles at each end of the barricade fly crudely painted flags depicting a bird rising from a pile of ashes. The guards are plainly visible but neither hail nor challenge. The walls near the barricade are covered with graffiti. Large slogans, apparently written with charcoal, cover the fronts of several buildings. The big, black, block letters read "Long live Chauntecleer!" and "We are the way!" There are other slogans proclaiming the rightness of "us" and the wrongness of "them," but little explanation of who is who.



The sergeant and 10 warriors manning the barricade belong to the Cult of the Phoenix (see area 10 for details). They allow no one except members of their cult to pass. If the PCs approach the barricade, the guards neither hail them nor answer if hailed. Negotiation is impossible, because the guards refuse to speak to outsiders. They merely watch and wait until an intruder either attacks or attempts to pass the barricade, then immediately open fire with their bows. The barricade provides good cover; for missile attacks, treat the barricade defenders as 75% hidden by cover (−7 to armor class).

The warriors are all fierce fighters but not suicidal. It is possible for the PCs to capture one or two for interrogation. The Cult of the Phoenix is not a secret society, therefore the PCs can learn details about the cult from prisoners. One detail that the PCs might find interesting is that anyone captured or surrendering to the guards is bound and taken as a prisoner to the Temple of the Pools (area 10).

Sergeant: AL NE; AC 3 (−4 under cover); MV 9; F4; hp 22; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 14; XP 270; banded mail, shield, long bow, long sword, dagger.

Cult warriors (10): AL any evil; AC 8 (1 under cover); MV 12; F2 (×5), F1 (×5); hp 14, 13, 12 (×2), 11, 9, 8, 6, 4, 2; THAC0 19, 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 11; XP 65, 35; leather armor, short bow, short sword, dagger.

10. Temple of the Pools.

Through the pervasive pall of smoke clinging to the city, you see a large temple ahead. It has been thoroughly whitewashed, and large tongues of flame have been painted in exuberant profusion around the temple's columns. You notice that people are staring at you, and you occasionally overhear remarks like, "They are not one with the ash," and "They bear no mark!" These comments are not particularly hostile but certainly aren't friendly.

This was the Temple of the Pools, a quiet, multi-denominational structure dedicated to no particular deity or alignment. The temple served as a meeting place for several of the city's congregations but now serves only the Cult of the

Phoenix. It is a clean, open, airy structure that was neither built as a fortress nor ever intended to be defended.

The temple is constructed of white granite and gray marble. While the craftsmanship is superb, the structure has no elaborate decoration, statuary, or artwork. The ceilings are 10′ high throughout the temple. The Cult of the Phoenix uses the temple as their headquarters. It is the barracks, armory, and prison for the cult, and cloister for its clerics.

The Cult of the Phoenix

Because the city's clerics have been unable to control the plague, the disease has shaken the faith of many people, who believe they have been abandoned by their deities. A strange cult sprang up to fill this sudden spiritual void. The Cult of the Phoenix took root near the south gate and is spreading through the city.

The cult believes that the world is being punished by the gods and can be purified of its offensive ways only through fire. Thus, like the phoenix, a new and better world will be reborn from the ashes of the old. Cult followers are branded with a small bird symbol (usually on the forehead or forearm). The cult teaches that all other religions and beliefs are false and should be destroyed. Anything not "of the cult" is tainted and blasphemous.

The cult of the Phoenix is not particularly well organized, nor is it a precision military machine. If the PCs raid the temple, cult members defend their territory in a hectic, hodge-podge fashion and without a great deal of strategy. If the PCs retreat, the cult is relentless in pursuit. Any cult warriors or clerics left alive (including those on the barricades) pursue with a "hit and run" strategy until the PCs are either killed, captured, or reach the safety of a city militia barricade (area 2). If the PCs escape into militia-controlled territory, the cult abandons pursuit and returns to the temple.

10A. The Pools. The temple is constructed over an underground spring whose clean, fresh waters are channeled through the foundation into eight deep, clear, granite pools. Each pool is 75′ in diameter and gradually descends to a depth of 10′ at the center. The pools were used as a source of fresh water by the surrounding neighborhood, and the area was a favorite lunching spot for local workers. That is now past; only members of the cult are allowed near the pools.

Standing guard at each of the pools are two **cult warriors** (F1, hp 6 each, see area 10C for complete statistics). The guards shout an alarm if they see anyone who doesn't bear a cult mark (see the "City Encounter Table" for encounter distances). The alarm immediately brings 1-4 warriors from the meeting hall (area 10C) to investigate. If these warriors also begin shouting or the sounds of battle are heard, the remainder of the guards from area 10C arrives in 1-4 rounds. Any alarm or noise of battle that continues more than five rounds also summons the cult leader, his bodyguards, and the clerics from areas 10E-10G in 1-4 more rounds.

If the PCs can kill or subdue the pool guards quietly before being seen, they can approach the meeting hall without being detected. The guards cannot see one another because they stand facing outward at the edge of each pool, not on the steps above.

10B. The Veranda. The temple is open on all sides and may be entered from any direction. The entire structure is surrounded by shallow stone steps leading up to a pillared veranda. The pillars are slender granite columns used to support the roof, and as a kind of calendar. The columns are aligned to mark several astronomical phenomenon; their shadows form intricate designs during the summer and winter solstices and the autumnal and vernal equinoxes. The cult has decorated the pillars with crude depictions of fire.

10C. Meeting Hall. The following encounter is best used after nightfall. During daylight hours, assume the area near the temple is dark with smoke, and the torches and lamps of the meeting hall have been lit.

> This huge hall is open on the east and west sides, with a row of large pillars down the center. The hall is literally ablaze with light. Ten torches, spluttering and fuming with bright yellow flame, burn in brackets ringing each of the columns. Hanging from the ceiling are small oil-lamp chandeliers that shed a steady bluish radiance. The cult has placed several iron cooking braziers in the hall, and these cast a smoky orange light.
>
> This mix of garish lighting makes the hall look festive, as if a carnival were being held within. But the light betrays a more sinister aspect; warriors of the cult are billeted here. They lounge among the pillars and near the cooking braziers on crude pallets of straw. A quick count reveals more than two dozen cult-branded warriors. Piles of wood are stacked near the braziers, and a large pile of bricks and stones is heaped in the northwest corner of the hall.

The meeting hall is the barracks and kitchen for most of the cult's warriors. This is also where the cult holds its rituals and ceremonies. Here, prisoners and sacrifices are tied to pillars and stoned to death (using rocks and bricks from the pile). If the PCs attack the hall, any guards standing watch at the pools (area 10A) immediately join the battle. The noise of battle alerts the cult leader and his henchmen (areas 10E-10G), who arrive in 1-4 rounds.

The warriors and clerics defend the temple with zeal but are not suicidal. If overmatched, the cult members withdraw and make no further attacks until the PCs attempt to leave the area (see "The Cult of the Phoenix" for cult strategy). If the PCs search, they find nothing of value in this area.

Cult warriors (25): AL any evil; AC 8; MV 12; F2 (×10), F1 (×15); hp 11 (×10), 6 (×15); THAC0 19, 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 11; XP 65, 35; leather armor, short bow, short sword, dagger.

10D. Prayer Rooms. When the temple was used for its intended purpose, a cleric and his followers could hold prayer meetings or religious instruction in one of these large, airy rooms. The rooms are devoid of decorations and other distractions, and the doors have no locks, bolts, or bars.

10E. Chauntecleer's Quarters. The cult leader, his bodyguards, and his clerics have moved into rooms 10E-10G, from which the doors have been removed for use as sleeping benches. This room is decorated with a variety of

flame and phoenix motifs. In the center of each wall, the floor, and the ceiling, a large phoenix dominates the mural. Chauntecleer can be found here 80% of the time. If he is not here, the PCs can find him performing a ritual in the meeting hall (area 10C).

Chauntecleer: AL NE; AC 7; MV 9; C7; hp 27; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 15, I 8, W 14, Ch 15; ML 11; XP 1,400; padded armor, shield, *war hammer +1, ring of fire resistance.*

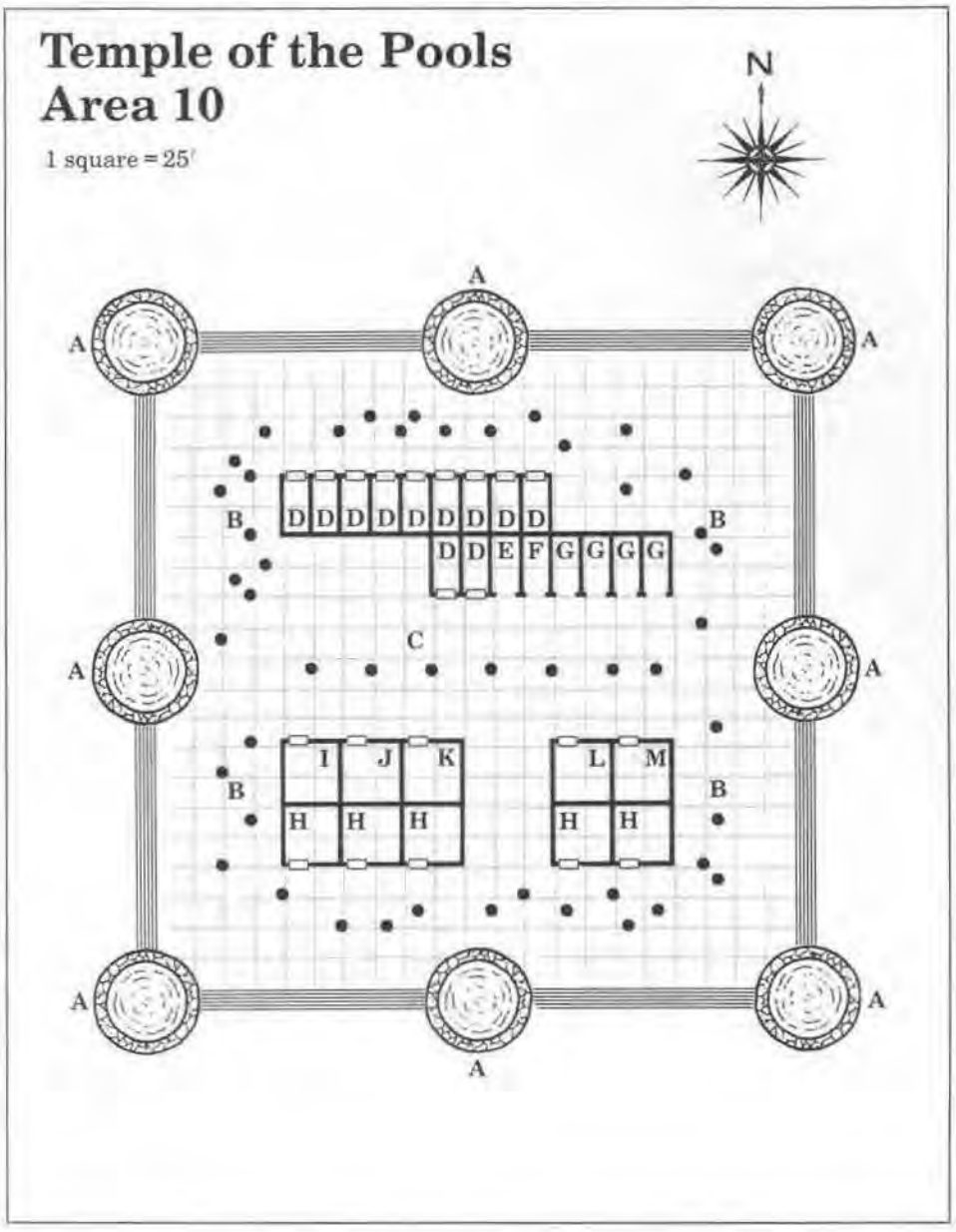
Spells: *cause light wounds* (×2), *command, endure heat/cold, sanctuary; dust devil, flame blade, resist fire/cold; protection from fire, pyrotechnics; giant insect.*

In a Forgotten Realms adventure, Chauntecleer is a cleric of the Elemental Lord Kossuth (see pages 60-61 of *Running the Realms* in the FORGOTTEN REALMS® Campaign Setting boxed set). In a WORLD OF GREYHAWK® adventure, he is a cleric of Pyremius (see page 64 of *A Guide to the World of Greyhawk Fantasy Setting*). If these deities are not satisfactory, the DM is free to select another for the cult's leader to serve.

A large black phoenix with red eyes and yellow claws is tattooed on Chauntecleer's forehead. He dresses in red and yellow robes covered by a long ash-gray cape. Inside a pocket of the cape, he carries a small pouch with the keys to the lock on the treasury door (area 10K) and the chests therein. Another pocket holds a small wooden box in which several holes have been drilled, for the comfort of three small fire beetles within. If Chauntecleer casts his *giant insect* spell, he uses these insects as the target.

Giant fire beetles (3): INT non; AL N; AC 4; MV 12; HD 3; hp 17, 14, 10; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SZ S; ML 12; XP 65; MM/18.

Chauntecleer does not have goblin fever; his motivations are purely personal. As a young man, Chauntecleer was clearing and burning brush on his father's farm when he stumbled over the carcass of a deer infested with rot grubs. The grubs immediately swarmed the young man. In terror, he fled wildly and accidentally ran headlong into one of the bonfires he had made. Though badly burned, the young man's life was saved when the fire killed the rot grubs. His father found him a short time later and tended his wounds, but Chauntecleer was close to death. Delirious, he wandered long in dreams of fire and



flame but eventually recovered with amazingly few scars to show for his ordeal.

He refused to see his salvation as a mere accident and believed the fire had saved him deliberately. He felt "purified" by the fire and, as it had saved him, he determined to serve it. There was no dissuading him, so he left his father's farm and offered his service to the god of fire.

After his training as a cleric, Chauntecleer wandered from city to city in search of converts. He had walked the streets of Waen Fawr for months, and was becoming known as one of the town's characters, when the plague struck. Chauntecleer took this calamity as a sign from his deity that "now was the time and this was the place." He intends to usher in the Reign of Fire and Rule of Flame. Out of the ashes, he wants a new, purified world to rise like a phoenix.

In truth, Chauntecleer's deity has nothing to do with the plague. The Reign of Fire and Rule of Flame are part of the mythology of Chauntecleer's religion and are meant as allegory, not literal fact. Unfortunately, his zeal for

his religion and its mythology have become so intermingled in his mind that he has become fanatical and unreasonable. He sees the present conflict as a holy war against unbelievers, a war in which he intends that only "those of the ash" will rise as the phoenix, while all others "perish in the soot."

Until the plague, few people even listened to the ragged cleric, let alone joined his cult. Now, with their faith in the old ways shaken, many people listen and join. The cult is growing at an alarming rate. When approached by Danell, Zeeker Olm's assistant who was looking for plague cure ingredients, Chauntecleer had the impertinent blasphemer thrown into the Pit (area 10L). Chauntecleer does not want the fever cured. The longer the plague lasts, the more people join his cult. (Fear and desperation drive people into the cult, not any obvious benefits.)

10F. Bodyguards' Post. This is a sentry post for the Claws of the Phoenix, Chauntecleer's personal bodyguards. There is little in the room other than food and water for the guards and a weapons cache containing five short swords, five spears, and five hand axes.

The guards sit outside the doorway and move to intercept anyone approaching Chauntecleer's quarters. They allow no weapons to be carried into their leader's quarters by anyone (not even the other cult clerics). The guards are fanatical in their protection; unless Chauntecleer orders otherwise they move to put themselves between him and any possible danger.

In all, there are 10 bodyguards working in teams of five, 12 hours on duty and 12 off (off-duty bodyguards are in area 10K). The bodyguards are easily identified by their shaved heads, and all are branded on both forearms and on the forehead. If Chauntecleer is killed while any bodyguards still live, the survivors immediately attack his killer, fighting for vengeance no matter what the odds.

Bodyguards (5): AL NE; AC 3; MV 9; F4; hp 22 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 20; XP 175; banded mail, shield, long bow, long sword, dagger.

10G. Clerics' Quarters. These rooms are huge, identical, bare, and empty of everything but a prayer rug and a small brazier for cooking. The door to each room has been removed from its hinges and placed inside the room for use as a sleeping bench. Each room is occupied by a cult cleric. If Chauntecleer is killed, the cult is in tumult until a new leader is chosen from among these clerics. There is a good deal of infighting among them as each cleric attempts to become Chauntecleer's favorite. Because of their jealousy of each other only one cleric occupies each of these over-large rooms.

Clerics (4): AL NE; AC 8; MV 9; C3; hp 14 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; ML 14; XP 120; padded armor, footman's mace. Spells: *cause fear, protection from good; fire trap.*

10H. Storage Rooms. These large, empty storage rooms were used by the various sects worshiping in the temple. Each is identical, with a thick door held shut by a stout bolt and lock. The walls are lined with shelves, and each room has bins and large baskets for storage. If the PCs search, they find nothing of interest. The cult has long since removed anything of use or value from the rooms.

10I. Armory. The floor of this room is stacked high with 150 homemade clubs, 130 crude spears, and six unlabeled boxes. There are few metal weapons and no armor or shields. With these crude weapons, Chauntecleer intends to conquer the city. If the PCs investigate, they find 16 short swords. The clubs are primarily table legs, iron pipes, and boards; the spears are no more than sharpened sticks. Five of the boxes, stolen from the militia, contain 30 well-made arrows each; the other box contains 15 daggers.

If the PCs destroy the weapons, each should receive a 200 XP bonus. If the PCs use the weapons to arm the cult's prisoners, see area 10L for details. If the PCs seize the weapons in order to sell them, they find the clubs and spears are worthless, and the militia immediately claims the arrows and daggers (with no reward). In a plague-afflicted city, the PCs should have larger concerns than the resale of seized booty, and the DM may wish to impose a 100-XP greed penalty on each PC attempting such a sale.

10J. Religious Storage.

This room has a musty but pleasant smell. The walls are lined with shelves, and the center of the room holds more shelves and a number of large baskets and bins. The room is filled with a variety of objects and accouterments needed in the rituals of the varying religions using the temple. There are bells, small braziers, candles, chimes, incense and incense burners, whistles, and a large number of objects whose names and uses you do not know. The bins and baskets hold carefully folded robes, vestments, cassocks, and prayer rugs.

The top shelf in the northeast corner holds several pens and inkwells. Next to these, wrapped in a white, ink-stained rag, is a stack of 30 sheets of papyrus. As this is a communal storage area used by all, the PCs can find nothing of great value other than the papyrus. If the PCs investigate the bins and baskets, they may find two **cult warriors** (F2, hp 11 each, see area 10C for complete statistics). These two were shirking their duty and hid under the robes in a bin as soon as they heard the PCs approach. If anyone reaches into the bin, the warriors immediately attack. Any PC investigating the bin is surprised on a roll of 1-7.

10K. Treasury. This door is locked with a large, intricate, and cumbersome device that requires three keys to open. The first key must be inserted and turned to unlock a plate covering a second keyhole. The actual lock mechanism requires two separate keys to unlock, inserted and turned one after the other in the newly exposed keyhole.

The lock may be picked by a thief but requires a triple attempt, the first attempt to expose the inner keyhole and the next two attempts to unlock the lock. If the thief fails to expose the keyhole, no attempts to unlock the lock can be made. If the thief fails to unlock the first part of the double lock, the device remains locked and no further attempts can be made.

A *knock* spell exposes the inner keyhole and unlocks the first part of the double lock only. However, two *knock* spells cast consecutively open the lock.

Forcing the lock destroys the inner works and permanently fuses the lock

closed. If this happens, the door must be forced open. The door can be hit automatically, but is an iron-bound, heavy-beamed creation that takes 40 hp damage before opening (edged weapons do half-damage). If the PCs pick the locks or have acquired the keys (see area 10E) and open the door (even slightly), two small bells fall from their perch above the door and clatter loudly across the floor. If the PCs force the door, the two bells fall at the first blow to the door.

> This room is partitioned into alcoves by great sheets of canvas. If it ever contained any shelving or bins, they have been removed. The canvas sheets are tied to rings driven into the ceiling and floor. It is difficult to see what is in any particular alcove until it is entered. The room has a lived-in look. On the floor, well-gnawed bones mingle with apple cores and moldy crusts of bread.

This room was used for religious instruction and partitioned to separate the beginner classes from more expert students. It is now the cult's treasury. When not on duty, Chauntecleer's bodyguards (see area 10F) are locked in the treasury and act as its watchmen. The bells triggered by the door act as their wake-up call. If the bells fall, the guards are ready and waiting. The penalty for unauthorized entry (by anyone) into the treasury is death. Chauntecleer told his guards, "If a thief escapes, you die in his place." Therefore, the guards fight to the death and neither surrender nor negotiate.

The farthest alcove contains three large chests and many large sacks and bags. The sacks and bags contain all manner of gold and silver dinner services, knives and forks, cups and saucers donated by cult members, and many precious objects looted from nearby shops and homes. One small bag contains a wealth of jewelry, mostly heirlooms donated by cult members. In all, the bagged gold, silver, and jewelry is worth 10,000 gp. Chauntecleer intends to melt down the precious objects and thus purify them with fire. The gold and silver can then be used by the cult.

The three locked chests contain coins, gems, and magical items taken from local shops or prisoners. The locks are not complicated and may be picked with the normal chance of success. The locks may be forced open (each takes 10 hp damage before opening; half damage from edged weapons). Hammering a chest open may damage its contents (see below).

The first chest holds 3,000 gp in mixed gold and silver coins. The second chest contains 15 gold rings worth 20 gp each, two platinum rings worth 50 gp each, a gold arm-band worth 100 gp, and three ornate silver scroll tubes worth 50 gp each. Two of the scroll tubes are empty, but one contains a scroll of three spells: *cure light wounds, hold person,* and *cure disease.* The third chest contains the following magical items: one potion of *fire resistance,* two potions of *healing,* a *ring of protection +1,* and a *wand of magic detection.* The third chest also contains 25 vials of holy water that the cult appropriated from the other religious orders. If this chest is hammered open, one potion (DM's choice) is ruined and 1-10 vials of holy water are broken.

10L. The Pit. This is the prison where all who await death by ritual sacrifice spend their last days. The cult rituals

do not demand sacrifices be in pristine condition, therefore Chauntecleer ordered all prisoners bound and placed here. He views any who survive the Pit as worthy to be sacrificed. The door opens outward and is not locked, but is wedged at the top and bottom. The wedges are tightly driven in, making it impossible to force the door open from the inside. If the PCs knock the wedges free and open the door, they are confronted with the following:

> An unending moan washes over you like the endless lamentation of those condemned to hell. The reek of human suffering accompanies the sight of a mass of people bound hand and foot. As the horrid scene becomes clearer, you realize that many of the prisoners have died from lack of food and water. The survivors wriggle about as best they can in their bound condition.

The cult's prisoners are simply tied up and left in this room without food or water. They are thus imprisoned until they die or are sacrificed.

If the PCs examine the bodies, they find 53 dead and 27 still alive, including Danell, Zeeker Olm's assistant. He is weak but can walk and defend himself. Danell is a mage but currently has no spells memorized. The other prisoners are a poor collection of peasants, shop owners, and other innocents captured and imprisoned by the cult. Half can no longer walk or defend themselves, and the others are weak and unarmed.

If the PCs free the prisoners but do nothing else to help them, the cult soon recaptures the unfortunates and places them back in the Pit. If the PCs free and arm those prisoners able to fight (giving them weapons from the armory, area 10I), the party receives the experience points listed for each prisoner. If the prisoners are freed, armed, and led to a place of relative safety, the DM should award the experience points and an additional 500-XP bonus for each PC. However, circumstances and fortunes of war may not permit such actions. If the PCs can do no more than free the prisoners, they suffer no penalty. While it seems cold hearted, the party must remember there is a plague to deal with, and the disease takes more lives in a day than the cult takes in a month.

Danell: AL LG; AC 10; MV 12; M3; hp 3 (8 if healed); THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; ML 11; XP 65 (if rescued); no spells memorized.

Prisoners (26): AL any; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 3; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 8; XP 15.

Statistics for movement (MV) and attacks (#AT) apply only to the 13 prisoners able to walk and defend themselves.

10M. Tool Storage. This chamber holds mops, buckets, and other tools for cleaning and repairing the temple. In the northwest corner are two five-gallon kegs of lamp oil and a stack of 50 torches. The oil may be used for grenadelike missiles, poured on the floor and set alight, or spilled to make footing treacherous (roll Dexterity or less on 1d20 every step or fall for 0-1 hp damage). If poured on the floor, one gallon of oil spreads into a thin film 25' in diameter. Oil spreads evenly on a flat surface, and a PC standing still while pouring is surrounded by it. If set alight, the oil burns for approximately two minutes and does damage to anyone crossing it as listed on page 100 of the *PH*.

Concluding the Adventure

If the adventurers are completely unsuccessful in their attempts to find ingredients for the plague remedy, they receive no reward from the city. This does not necessarily mean the end of the city or the PCs, however. The DM may use the city militia, other adventurers, and ordinary citizens to help bring in the items needed for the cure. In any case, the outbreak of goblin fever eventually runs its course and comes to an end after 1d6 + 6 months.

If the PCs are unsuccessful in combating the plague, the DM may take the Cult of the Phoenix in any direction he wishes. The fire cult can seize power, continue as a troublesome menace, or fall to pieces as the fever decimates its ranks.

When order is restored (DM's option as to how long this takes), the city pays a 1,000-gp reward for recovering the powdered dragon's tooth from Jade's Alchemical Shop, and another 1,000 gp for finding the double boiler. The PCs receive an additional 2,000-gp reward for recovering the holy water and the sheets of papyrus from the Temple of the Pools. The city replaces any equipment, weapons and armor, or magical items the PCs lost or damaged in helping combat the plague. In addition, Zeeker Olm immediately pays the 1,000-gp reward for the return of his assistant, Danell.

After he has all the ingredients (and barring any mishaps), Zeeker can brew the plague cure in 1d4 + 7 days. If Danell has been rescued, the work can be completed in 1d4 + 2 days.

If the goblin fever is conquered, there is still ample opportunity for adventure in Waen Fawr. The city's walls and towers must be retaken, and house-to-house fighting may be the only way to subdue some occupants and forcibly give them the cure. There are occasional snipers to rout, bandits to arrest, and a great deal of cleaning up and rebuilding to do. The city leaders are glad to hire the adventurers for as many of these jobs as the PCs wish.

If the PCs have overthrown the Cult of the Phoenix, fanatical members may still be abroad who are more than happy to make life difficult for them. If Chauntecleer was not killed or captured, he seeks revenge on the PCs at the first opportunity.

The DM is free to expand the adventure and include other ingredients of the plague cure for the PCs to find. If the PCs fail to find a particular ingredient or cannot resolve one of the set encounters, there are other alchemical stores, minor temples, and various shops that may (or may not) hold the needed items. The DM can create any number of adventures in which the PCs try to find needed substances for the goblin fever cure. Other adventure possibilities include roving bands of low-level undead wandering the city, or higher-level undead, dopplegangers, and lycanthropes using Waen Fawr as their hunting ground or larder. Ω

Turn A
New Leaf
For your free booklet, write: Tree City USA, The National Arbor Day Foundation, Nebraska City, NE 68410.
The National Arbor Day Foundation

Continued from page 21

3'-wide section in the middle of the bridge supports a well-worn sitting bench. The bridge is painted a fiery shade of red, with small painted water-flowers dotted all over its surface. Despite its light construction, the bridge is sturdy enough to support even an ogre, if one should attempt to cross. The bridge's beauty is marred only by a few goblin chew-marks on the east side, and a number of half-hearted attempts at graffiti, including, "Hah hah stupid fairy, we cot you," and "This bridge tastes terrible."

Unda built this bridge many years ago, for three reasons. It's pretty, and it aids foot traffic in case anyone wants to come see her. Unda's original theory was that the bridge would also keep the goblins from wading in the stream when they wanted to cross the river. Every time the goblins waded across the river, it was a minor catastrophe, especially when Stinkfoot crossed, because he never took a bath. The goblins stirred up the mud at the bottom and fouled the water. The fish complained to Unda about the stench, and various sensitive water-plants would just curl up and die. However, much to Unda's dismay, the goblins wade across the river anyway. They refuse to use the bridge because "It's an ugly little fairy bridge for wimpy girlie-men."

12. Spring Rock. This spring is the only remaining water source for the Dovedale River. Without the tiny spring, the Dovedale River would be utterly dry. The water from this spring comes out of a 6"-diameter hole on the top of a roughly spherical 10'-diameter boulder. The resulting stream is 3' wide and 6"-8" deep, a mere trickle compared to the normal flow of the Dovedale River. Above this point the riverbed continues on, dry as a bone.

If the PCs have rescued Unda and try to put her in this spring, she tells them that this is the wrong place. Her spring is much larger, and it is farther up the dale.

The walls of the Dovedale are not as steep here as they are in the rest of the dale. The walls are climbable, although the muddy slope is still quite steep. The ascent takes about four turns. Anyone with climbing skills can make the ascent in half this time. Anyone who climbs the walls of the Dovedale is coated in mud and slime by the time he reaches the top.

13. Unda's Spring. When the PCs reach this area, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> You have reached what must be the source of the Dovedale River, at least in normal times. The high walls of the dale close about you, steep and gray. The walls surround a 30'-diameter pool shaded by tall willows and lithe maples. The pool is evidently quite deep, but the water level has visibly dropped. You can see where water normally flows out of the pool and into the riverbed of the Dovedale River, but now that channel is dry. Nestled among the trees on the east side of the pool is a tiny two-story cottage of white stucco , complete with a railed porch and a brick chimney. The cottage appears to be built for someone who is no more than 2' tall.

The pool is indeed the source of the river. Although the pool appears to be small and shallow, it extends down more than 200' through tortuously winding caves to a deep, pure underground aquifer. Unda has to perform daily maintenance on the spring or it becomes choked and clogged, cutting off the water supply.

The house beside the pool is Unda's home: too small for a human or an elf, although a very short and very slim halfling might be able to squeeze in. The cottage is outfitted with everything that a well-to-do human might have in an expensive home. The furniture is made from expensive woods, the plates and cups are made of fine bone china, the dwarven-made silverware is real silver, the floor-harp in the corner is beautifully made and well tuned, the decorations are tasteful and subdued. The layout of the cottage is left to the DM's imagination.

Concluding the Adventure

When the PCs rescue Unda from Gravelbeak's iron cage, she is too weak to walk or cast spells. Unda tells the PCs that they must return her to her pool, at the far end of the Dovedale (area 13). If the goblins are chasing the PCs, they continue the chase as the PCs carry Unda up the path to the pool. The PCs can simply lower Unda into the water once they reach the pool.

Once Unda is in the pool, the surface of the pool begins to bubble and froth. The water level quickly rises, and within minutes after Unda's return, water begins boiling down the dry channel of the Dovedale River. The river will be restored to its normal flow within hours after Unda returns to the spring. Five rounds after she returns to her pool, Unda will be restored enough to join any combat between the PCs and the goblins. Unda stays in the water and shoots the goblins with her specially made bow. She cannot cast spells until she has rested in her pool for at least eight hours.

After the PCs return Unda to her pool, the river fairy urges them to stay by the pool for a day. At the end of this time, Unda gives the PCs several magical berries as a reward for rescuing her from the wicked goblins. Unda cast her *cure light wounds* spell on the blackberry vines that grow near her home. The spell caused 1d6+1 blackberries to become magical. Each berry cures 1 hp when eaten. Unda cast the spell twice, so the PCs will get 2d6+2 berries. Each berry lasts one month, after which time it becomes nonmagical. Unda also gives each PC a kiss on the forehead, instilling them with "the luck of the fairies." Each PC gets a +1 bonus on all saves for the next month.

If the PCs restore the Dovedale to its normal healthy flow, the local farmers give the PCs the 100-gp reward. The DM should award a bonus of 150 XP to each PC. If the PCs also get the golden fly away from Gravelbeak, thus ensuring Salvel's safety, the DM should award an additional 100-XP bonus to each PC. If the PCs discover Grabbo's impersonation of Ben Cogs and manage to clear Ben's reputation, each PC should get an additional 25 XP.

This module provides hooks for several further adventures. It is possible to develop a running feud between the PCs and the Dovedale goblin tribe. Will the goblins attempt to retaliate against the PCs for rescuing Unda and thwarting their carefully laid scheme to capture Salvel? Adventures could also be based on the Three Stone Giants (Where was their lair? What happens if someone turns them back into flesh?), the dangerous wolves in the Dalewold, and the secret goblin tunnel leading into the Inn-on-the-Peak's beer cellar. Ω

THE IRON ORB OF THE DUERGAR

BY PETER ÅBERG

The Northmen and their allies play hardball.

Artwork by Mark Nelson

Peter writes: "The cold darkness of the Arctic North provides the backdrop for this adventure. During those long winter months, many strange and wondrous stories are told around the fireplaces, where friends and family gather to keep warm. This is one such story."

"The Iron Orb of the Duergar" is an AD&D® adventure for a group of 6-8 player characters of levels 11-15 (about 100 total levels, or at least 70 levels if the group is cautious and well equipped). The group should be well balanced, with at least two sturdy fighters, both of whom should be armed with +3 or better weapons. A dwarf or gnome could prove beneficial to the group.

This module can be played as a stand-alone adventure or as part of a series of adventures set in the Arctic North. If used in the FORGOTTEN REALMS® setting, it can easily be adapted to either Icewind Dale or Damara. In the GREYHAWK® world, it could begin in the Archbarony of Ratnik.

Adventure Background

"Flee! The Northmen are coming! Flee! Flee for your lives!" It had been nearly two centuries since these cries of alarm were heard in the cities and towns of the southern kingdoms. Then last summer, an old scourge suddenly returned from across the North Sea, a scourge that had been all but forgotten, remembered only in old chronicles as a dark period of suffering and chaos.

Throughout the summer months, wave after wave of barbaric marauders descended on the region, preying on its cities and towns, leaving only corpses and ruin behind. By the time the raids finally ceased with the onset of autumn storms, innumerable villages lay in ashes, entire towns stood abandoned, and once-proud cities were thoroughly sacked. Thousands of innocent people were killed or taken away as slaves. The nightmare of long ago had returned. The fierce, plundering warriors from the North were back.

The people of the southern kingdoms now pray for someone who can deliver them from the wrath of the Northmen, someone who can prevent further raids when summer returns. Generous rewards have been offered for anyone capable of accomplishing this task, but few are brave enough—or foolhardy enough—to confront the Northmen in their homeland.

For the DUNGEON MASTER™

The Northmen (also known as Norsemen or Vikings) are a semi-barbaric warrior people renowned for their mastery of arms and combat, and for their strong emphasis on pride and personal bravery. They are described in "The Northmen" sidebar on page 52.

The calamity that has befallen the southern kingdoms has its roots in an ominous event that occurred just over a year ago in the land of the Northmen. At that time, a remarkable object was unearthed in a mine near the city of Tallborg. The Northmen uncovered a perfect orb made of black iron, no more than a foot in diameter, without markings or other surface features of any kind. The orb was buried in the rubble of an ancient underground complex of long-forgotten origin.

The Northmen didn't know that the orb was the *iron orb of the duergar* (see sidebar), a powerful artifact created in ancient times by the evil dwarven race known as the duergar, archenemies of the common dwarves. The *orb* has powerful magical abilities as well as an intelligence of its own.

When the *iron orb* was brought to Tallborg to be placed in the city's temple as a trophy, it revealed its true nature. As Ulvmard, high priest of Odin and chieftain of the Northmen, grasped the *orb* to place it on the altar, it suddenly levitated out of his hands and assumed a position floating in mid-air just above his head. From that day on, Ulvmard was changed.

The *orb* bestowed its abilities on Ulvmard, providing him with powers he had previously only dreamed of wielding. He rapidly became dependent on the *orb*'s powers and the flattering praise it continuously offered. Soon he couldn't do anything without consulting the *orb*.

The *orb*'s advice soon turned into screamed commands. More and more the *orb* took the initiative, locking Ulvmard in a mental battle of wills over who controlled his actions. The *orb* began using the high priest to further its own goals—goals that encompassed the destruction of the dwarven race and the restoration of duergar power in the region.

Treachery of the Dwarves

The dwarves have long been friends and allies of the Northmen, and the two peoples exchange both knowledge and goods.

The *Iron Orb*

The *iron orb of the duergar* is a powerful artifact created ages ago by the high priests of the duergar in cooperation with the illithids (mind flayers). It is said that the *orb* was created by trapping the spirit of a beholder in a black, seamless sphere of iron, no more than 1' in diameter. Whether this is true or not, the *orb* possesses many of the powers normally attributed to beholders, as well as a malevolent, superior intelligence.

The *iron orb* was originally constructed to act as the brain of a mighty warrior of iron, also created by the duergar. This warrior was a gigantic variant of an iron golem, with a golem's strengths and immunities but, due to the *orb*, also possessing intelligence and considerable magical abilities. The duergar used the iron warrior to bring them many victories in their ancient wars against the dwarves.

When the dwarves, under the leadership of Durin Ironfoot, finally defeated the duergar at a great battle in the North, the iron warrior was destroyed—and so, it was thought, was the *iron orb*. No one had seen the *orb* in centuries, until it turned up in the hands of the Northmen.

When not part of an iron warrior, the *orb* can bestow its power on anyone it chooses as a temporary host, until a new warrior can be built. The *orb* can choose only a creature that actively tries to communicate with it or invoke its powers while in physical contact. Once it finds a host, the *orb* levitates to a position above the host's head, thereby establishing a mental link with its host.

At first, the *orb* is friendly and useful, giving good advice and putting its powers at the host's disposal. Soon, however, it attempts to take control of its host's actions. Simultaneously, the *orb* affects the host's mind and creates a psychological dependency. The host is eventually reduced to a tool under the complete control of the *orb*, unless he possesses exceptional mental powers (high Wisdom and Charisma). If the host has the mental power to resist, the *orb* and its host become locked in a constant struggle of wills, neither in full control all the time.

The *iron orb* was created to battle the dwarves, and it singlemindedly pursues this goal in any way it can. If its host has the power to build a new iron warrior, the *orb* will insist that this gets done, no matter what the cost. Once the warrior is completed, the *orb* abandons its temporary host for this new body; the *orb*'s last command to its former host is to place it into the head of the iron warrior.

The *orb*'s host is capable of removing the *orb* at any time. However, if the host has been in possession of the *orb* for any length of time, the craving for it is too strong to resist for more than a few minutes.

Others can remove the *orb* from the host only under certain circumstances. If the host loses consciousness (ordinary sleep is not enough), the *orb* falls to the ground. A dwarf, gnome, or duergar can overcome the *orb*'s magical attachment by physically grabbing it (20% chance per attempt, one attempt per round) and forcefully removing it from the host.

Orb Powers

The *orb* is lawful-evil and has the following powers, all of which it can bestow on its host.

Duergar powers: *invisibility* at will; *enlarge/reduce* (20th level); +4 on all saving throws vs. spells; immunity to paralysis, poison, all illusion/phantasm spells, and all other mind-affecting spells.

Beholder powers: *anti-magic ray* in a 90° arc in front of the host (140-yard range); *charm person, charm monster, sleep, telekinesis* (250 lbs.), *flesh to stone* (30-yard range), *disintegrate* (20-yard range), *fear* (as wand), *slow, cause serious wounds* (50-yard range), *death ray* (40-yard range). The *anti-magic ray* and any one of the 10 other powers can function each round. Normal saving throws are allowed.

Special powers: In addition to the duergar and beholder powers, the *orb* grants 30% magic resistance. It can act as a *crystal ball* up to three times per day. The results of the scrying are projected into the mind of the host. The *orb* can cast a *sending* spell six times per day and *teleport without error* up to five times per day. Once a week, the *orb* can open a temporary portal to the realm of the Underdark, home of the drow elves, illithids, and many other creatures. The portal stays open for 12 hours, until the *orb* chooses to close it, or until 20 creatures have passed through it (in either direction), whichever comes first.

There is no known method of destroying the *iron orb*. Supposedly, it survived being thrown into molten lava by Durin Ironfoot. The dwarves are said to have devised some scheme to destroy the *orb* involving smashing it against the *anvil of the gods*, an artifact rumored to be in their possession, but nothing is known for sure.

Until recently, they worked together to control the various creatures that infest the mountains and mines of the region.

Under the dark influence of the *orb*, Ulvmard soon began talking about the great treachery of the dwarves, how they had killed miners to keep the Northmen away from the best sections of the mountains. Several mutilated bodies were produced to support his claims. He called for the Northmen to shake off the yoke of slavery to the dwarves and become their own masters. The dwarves had no right to determine where the Northmen could mine.

The Northmen

The Northmen differ greatly in terms of both appearances and customs from the peoples of the southern kingdoms. In general, they are taller and stronger, and they tend to have long blond or red hair, and blue eyes.

Foremost among the Northmen's personality traits are bravery and ferociousness in combat. Their rigorous training and strong physiques enable them to withstand wounds that would incapacitate or kill a normal man. In game terms, Northmen above zero level can withstand wounds until they reach −5 hp before collapsing (the optional "hovering on death's door" rules from the *DMG*, page 75, are recommended). Dying in combat is a great honor for any Northman since he thereby gains immediate entry to Valhalla.

The Northmen are devoutly religious. Odin is their primary god, but Thor is by far the most popular one (due to his warrior appeal).

The Northman tongue is quite different from Common and is understandable only to those who have received specific training in the language. Very few Northmen speak Common.

The Northmen are skilled at metallurgy, and they are expert weaponsmiths. The excellent steel they manufacture is almost legendary for its unsurpassed strength and quality. It is made through an ancient and secret process from iron ore mined in the towering mountains of the North. Weapons manufactured from this steel are highly prized and sought after. The DM may choose to give a nonmagical +1 bonus to attack rolls for Northman weapons.

Ulvmard's position as high priest of Odin permitted him to claim he was acting on Odin's behalf, and that the *orb* was a gift from Odin to him and his people. For this reason alone, most of his subjects obeyed him. Those who refused to follow the high priest's bidding were enslaved and forced to work in the mines. The Northmen fought many small initial skirmishes with the baffled dwarves. At the outset, the Northmen won most of these; the dwarves preferred to retreat rather than fight their former friends. Later, the skirmishes became more fierce as the Northmen made inroads into dwarven territory.

Since the dwarves vastly outnumber the Northmen, it was impossible for Ulvmard to consider initiating an outright war against them. Instead, under the influence of the *orb* once more, he called on his people to help him create a colossal iron warrior to lead the fight against the dwarves. When summer came, Ulvmard ordered raiding parties to pillage the southern kingdoms to acquire the necessary goods and money to build the iron warrior, and more importantly, slaves to work the mines in order to extract the vast quantities of iron ore that would be needed.

The Present Situation

When the adventure begins, six months have passed since the first raids against the southern kingdoms. The situation in the North is very tense. The Northmen have pushed the dwarves as far as they can without initiating a full-scale war. Deep inside one of the Northmen mines, amid the ruins of an ancient duergar fortress, the iron warrior is nearing completion. When it is ready, Ulvmard will launch his attack against the dwarves, and the war will begin in earnest.

The Adventure Begins

If the PCs are sufficiently well known, they might learn of the calamity that has struck the southern kingdoms when local rulers petition them to provide assistance. If the PCs control land in the area, they might even have feudal obligations to do something about the Northmen and their raids.

When the adventure begins, the PCs are approaching the port city of Cisra. According to rumors, Cisra was completely ravaged during the raids and is now desperately in need of help. See the "City of Cisra" section below.

Spring is approaching, but the ground is still covered by a thinning layer of snow. The weather is cold and overcast. The DM should introduce the scenario by reading or paraphrasing the following to the players:

> Over the last few days of travel along the southern coast of the North Sea, you've seen increasingly frequent signs of the dreadful calamity that struck this region last year, before the snows of winter covered the ground. You've passed through numerous abandoned villages of burned-out houses, their inhabitants now dead or among the hundreds of people living in squalid huts and shacks amidst the ruins of plundered castles and mansions that dot the countryside.
>
> Those you've talked to have spoken of the Northmen, and how they came across the North Sea last summer to plunder and destroy. Everyone seems to have a friend or relative who was either killed or carried away into certain slavery. A sense of fear and desperation hangs in the air, for with the end of winter approaching, renewed raids by the Northmen may not be far off.

Through speaking with locals, the PCs can learn the information detailed in the "Adventure Background."

City of Cisra

> As you approach the city of Cisra, the destruction gets even worse. Not a village or building is left standing. The countryside seems completely deserted.
>
> At the ruined southern city gates, the situation is chaotic. Hordes of beggars and others who have lost everything confront you as you make your way through the gates, pleading for whatever scraps of food and coins you can spare.
>
> In the city, dislocated peasants and other homeless people crowd the streets and the many abandoned, burned-out buildings visible everywhere.

Cisra was looted several times and partially burned in last summer's raids by the Northmen. Despite this, everyone in the surrounding countryside now seems to have sought refuge in or near the city in anticipation of renewed Northman raids when spring arrives. Food is scarce, and already disease is

spreading too rapidly for the priests of the city to keep up.

The PCs will be approached by hungry, desperate people every step of their way through the city. Some beg for food or money; others have wounds or illnesses that need attention; still others demand that the PCs do something to prevent further raids by the Northmen.

Many rumors are circulating throughout the city, almost all of them concerning the Northmen and their plans. The PCs can hear one or two of these rumors whenever they meet an NPC:

—The Northmen have a new chieftain who has rekindled his people's martial spirit. (False)

—Ulvmard, the Northmen's chieftain, has been driven insane. (False)

—There are Northmen in Tallborg, their capital city, who are actively resisting their chieftain's rule. They need help to overthrow him. (True)

—The Northmen are selling the slaves they capture to some hostile country nearby. (False)

—The Northmen are forging vast quantities of weapons to use in a large-scale war against the south. (False)

—War has broken out between the Northmen and the dwarves of the north. (True, soon)

—A few merchants are still trading with the Northmen, secretly supplying them with vital goods. (True)

—The Northmen have sent spies to the city, to infiltrate the defenses. (False, but see below)

To continue the adventure, the PCs must pursue the rumor about the existence of a Northmen resistance. If they don't, the resistance should make contact with them; assume that the PCs' reputations are enough to bring them the offer below.

If the heroes pursue the rumor, they eventually find the person who started it, an old sailor by the name of Toros. With suitable encouragement (such as a few gold coins), Toros will tell the PCs about a man who came to Cisra a month ago looking for a group of adventurers to undertake an assignment of some sort. Toros met the man, who told him about the existence of a group of Northmen opposed to their chieftain. Three days later, the man suddenly disappeared. Toros knows nothing more about the man or what happened to him. (The man was killed by soldiers who believed he was a Northman spy.)

According to Toros, contacting the resistance involves going to a place called Ulf's Tavern in Tallborg and telling the owner you want to speak with Ragnar.

Toros: AL CG; AC 10; MV 12; F1; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 12; hand axe, dagger.

Heading North

Finding passage on a ship going north will be difficult and very expensive. Ordinary merchant vessels no longer sail across the North Sea. Rumor has it, though, that a few of the more daring merchant captains are earning a fortune by making runs to the North with goods that the Northmen are willing to pay handsomely for. Their cargoes are said to consist of tools, various chemicals, and even large quantities of fine clay and sand. (Ulvmard needs all of these items to build the iron warrior.) Cisra is often the last port of call for these ships before they head off across the North Sea.

Since it would not be wise for the unscrupulous captains of these vessels to let it become common knowledge that they are dealing with the Northmen, the PCs will need to muster whatever skills they have at establishing contacts to find a captain willing to give them passage. The price per person should be somewhere around 500 gp. For an additional fee (which the DM should determine), the captain might be willing to provide the PCs with suitable clothing so they can enter Tallborg posing as Northmen. The captain will want an extra 50% for dwarven passengers, because of the extra risk involved. (Dwarves are not very popular in Tallborg right now.)

The 60-mile journey due north across the North Sea takes roughly 2-3 days, depending on the winds (assume the PCs are traveling in a knarr, the most common cargo ship in the region). The DM may decide that the adventurers will have to face bad weather, sea monsters, or pirates during the voyage, but these meetings should not be allowed to overly weaken the PCs before they arrive in Tallborg.

Tallborg is not located directly on the coast. It lies along the Gothia River, several miles upstream. If the PCs decide not to accompany the ship into Tallborg's harbor, the captain drops them off a mile or so downstream from the city.

City of Tallborg

Tallborg is a small city of wooden single-story buildings, encircled by a 30'-high stone wall with watchtowers at regular intervals. The city rests on the western shore of the Gothia River. A harbor rambles outside the city walls, along the river. Refer to the Tallborg Area map for an overview of the city's surroundings.

Three gates lead into Tallborg: one by the harbor and two more at the main roads entering the city. Four guards stand watch at each gate, with four more standing by in the gate towers. (The guards live in the towers.)

The watchtowers along the city wall are spaced approximately 50' apart. Each tower is manned by a single guard.

City guards: AL CG; AC 4; MV 9; F2; hp 13 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 14; banded mail, long sword, dagger, short bow, 20 arrows, alarm horn.

Whenever a guard sounds his alarm horn, 2-4 guards from nearby posts arrive to investigate in two rounds.

Entering the City

Officially, the Northmen do not require a toll to enter Tallborg, but the PCs may find that a few gold pieces help make passing through the gates much easier and quicker, with no questions asked.

Anyone arriving at a city gate dressed as a southerner or speaking Common is arrested immediately. The PCs may convince the guards to reconsider the arrest by paying a hefty bribe (at least 100 gp per guard). If the PCs successfully bribe the guards, they are given Northman clothing as part of the deal.

If the PCs enter the city harbor by ship, read the following description.

> Darkness is falling when your ship reaches Tallborg and enters the harbor. The weather is clear but cold. A thick layer of snow covers the ground outside the tall city walls. A few other ships of smaller size are tied up in the harbor, but things are otherwise fairly quiet. There are very few people around.

Foreign ships are not unusual in Tallborg's harbor. The crews of such ships are officially not permitted to enter the city, but enforcement of this rule is sporadic at best, as long as those wishing to enter adopt Northman dress

and appearances, and know how much to bribe the guards. The ship's captain can tell the PCs how to do this; 2-3 gp per guard is enough.

If the PCs decide to enter the city in some other fashion, such as by scaling the city walls, *flying* in, or entering while *invisible*, the DM must determine their chances of doing so unnoticed. If the PCs are discovered, they may be in for a fight with the city guards (4-6 guards initially, with more arriving if a guard sounds an alarm horn).

At the time the PCs arrive in Tallborg, Ulvmard is holding an unannounced rally in front of the temple at the center of the city. This is happening regardless of whether the PCs choose to enter the city immediately or wait a while outside. The rally is attracting quite a crowd. Soon after passing through the gates, the PCs hear shouts and cheers from the city center.

Northmen in the city are all dressed in thick, heavy clothing made of animal hides and furs. Almost all the men have full beards. Many have a dirty, disheveled look. (These are miners temporarily in the city to enjoy themselves or to purchase supplies.)

Finding the way to Ulf's tavern (see page 55) is easy if the PCs ask for directions (and have a few gold coins to spare). Ulf's is a well-known establishment, the best place to meet people and relax over a jug of ale. The tavern is located right next to the temple square, at the center of the city, where Ulvmard is speaking.

The Temple

The largest and most beautiful building in Tallborg is the tall wooden temple dedicated to all the Northmen gods. Standing at the center of the city, the temple is a finely crafted structure made of long wooden staves, their lofty points reaching up toward the heavens. The temple facade is decorated with elaborate carvings and other fine patterns and designs.

Inside, large wooden figures representing the Northmen gods stand around a stone altar. Foremost among them is the one-eyed figure of Odin.

When the PCs arrive in the city, Ulvmard (see area 37 of "The Mine" for statistics) is giving a speech in front of the temple. Ulvmard is a tall, slim man in his early fifties. He is dressed in a fine black robe trimmed with white fur. His face is narrow with chiseled features, and his left eye is covered by a black patch. Numerous wrinkles in his face show that he once must have laughed a lot.

He is not laughing now, however, as he whips up hatred against the dwarves by revealing their latest plots and crimes. As he speaks, a black, featureless orb, no more than 1′ in diameter, floats a short distance above his head, moving as he does.

A contingent of Ulvmard's elite personal guards stands around the high priest, keeping the crowd at a distance.

Elite warriors (10): AL CN; AC 3; MV 9; F5; hp 39 (×2), 36, 30, 29, 27, 26, 25, 22, 20,; THAC0 16; #AT 1 (3/2 with long sword); Dmg by weapon type; S 17, D 15; ML 17; XP 175; long sword (specialized), dagger, chain mail, shield.

The PCs will hear the following part of Ulvmard's speech (given in the Northman tongue) even if they only pass by the temple square quickly.

> "Listen! Can you hear them? Working. Working, night and day. Endlessly they toil in the depths of the earth to bring about our destruction. Sleepless. Tireless. More like machines than living creatures.
>
> "They are not human. They do not have pride and honor. They are dwarves, by Odin! Treacherous. Scheming. Always trying to expand their power and influence. Always seeking new ways to fool us and rob us of our wealth.
>
> "But we will not let them rule us. We are Northmen, by Thor! And like Thor's hammer, we will strike to crush the measly dwarves. Our mighty iron warrior will soon be ready to break the back of the dwarven kingdom and tread on its corpse in victory.
>
> "So it shall be, by all the gods, unless someone can stop me. I mean—No one can stop us, of course. By Odin!"

For an instant the crowd seems slightly confused by Ulvmard's last statements (a result of the continuous conflict of wills between Ulvmard and the *orb*), but soon people begin cheering enthusiastically. Ulvmard's guards chant "Crush the dwarves! Crush the dwarves!" while banging their weapons against their shields.

Ulvmard disappears into the temple immediately after his speech. Once inside the temple, he *teleports* to the

mine to oversee the completion of the iron warrior. If the PCs attack Ulvmard during his speech, he flees in the same manner, leaving his guards to take care of the fighting.

Ulf's Tavern

Ulf's tavern is a large, two-story structure located by the temple square. As the PCs approach the building, they can hear singing and laughing coming from inside. A sign hanging above the door shows a jug brimming with ale.

Inside, the tavern is packed with Northmen miners enjoying their time off in the city. The ale flows freely as the boisterous crowd engages in tests of strength (like arm wrestling) and dexterity (such as throwing knives against targets across the room). No one takes any notice of the PCs when they enter. There is no place to sit, only standing room by the bar.

Ulf, the owner, is serving at the bar together with his wife, Ingrid. Ulf has a keen eye and will recognize the PCs as southerners even if they are wearing disguises. (Subtle clues such as body language and the expressions the adventurers use are difficult to hide without powerful magic.) Ulf is also a close friend of Ragnar, the man whom the PCs are looking for.

Ulf: AL CG; AC 10; MV 12; F2; hp 13; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 13; club, knife.

Ingrid: AL CG; AC 10; MV 12; F1; hp 7; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 14; throwing axe.

If the PCs approach Ulf and ask for Ragnar, he laughs loudly and asks:

> "And which Ragnar might that be, my friends? It's a common name, you know. There must be at least half a dozen men here this evening named Ragnar. Take a look around to see if you recognize the man you're looking for. I'm sure he'll come by eventually, if he's not here now. Meanwhile, what can I get you to drink?"

Without telling the PCs, Ulf sends a servant to his friend Ragnar's house to get him to come to the tavern.

If the PCs choose not to say anything to Ulf about looking for Ragnar, Ulf serves them their drinks and secretly sends for Ragnar anyway, since he knows Ragnar is expecting a group of adventurers from the south.

A few minutes later, a tall, muscular man in his early thirties appears at the door. He has a typical Northman beard, although it is unusually well trimmed and neat. His long blond hair reaches down to his broad shoulders.

Ulf motions for the man (who, of course, is Ragnar) to come up to the bar. He discretely nods toward the PCs while talking to him. Ragnar walks over to the party and addresses one of the PC fighters (in the Northman tongue):

> "By Thor! It's you, Ingmar! I haven't seen you in a long time. Are these your friends? We must share an ale and talk about old times together."

Ragnar: AL CG; AC 5; MV 9; R6; hp 49; THAC0 15; #AT 1 (3/2 with battle axe); Dmg by weapon type; S 18/27 (+1/+3), D 15, C 16; I 11, W 14, Ch 15; ML 14; chain mail, battle axe (specialized), long sword, spear, dagger, short bow, 20 flight arrows, potion of *healing*.

Ragnar is a commanding figure: tall and powerfully built, with a strong, deep voice to match his appearance. In the city, he tends to keep a low profile, avoiding undue attention to himself. Outdoors, in the wild, he is in his element. There he assumes an aura of confidence and determination that is otherwise hidden.

If Ragnar could have things his way (that is, if Ulvmard were not around), he would be living far from the city together with Anja, his betrothed (see "Ragnar's House"). Instead, because of his strong feelings about what Ulvmard is trying to do to the dwarves, he has reluctantly become the leader of a small, secret group of Northmen opposed to Ulvmard's rule. His role as resistance leader is complicated by the fact that Anja happens to be Ulvmard's daughter.

Ragnar asks the PCs where they are from and what they are doing in Tallborg. He thinks they might be the adventurers from the south he has been expecting, but he will be very careful about saying anything concerning the resistance until he is convinced they are not working for Ulvmard.

If his initial impression of the PCs is favorable, Ragnar asks them to accompany him to his house in the city, where they can speak more freely.

If the PCs fail to convince Ragnar of their good intentions, he leaves, making excuses that he is expected at home. If the PCs follow him home, he is on his guard, ready to defend himself (and Anja).

Ulvmard's House

High priest Ulvmard and his daughter Anja (see "Ragnar's House") live in a two-story building next to the temple. Since Ulvmard spends nearly all his time in the mine where the iron warrior is being constructed, Anja is the only person normally found in the house (in addition to servants and two guards). When the PCs arrive in the city, however, Anja has secretly gone to Ragnar's house in order to avoid meeting Ulvmard and being forced to attend his speech at the temple square.

Ragnar's House

Ragnar lives in a small wooden house near the harbor gate, next to several large stone buildings that serve as warehouses. On the inside, his simple dwelling consists of a single 30' × 25' room.

As the group approaches his house, Ragnar coughs loudly, pretending to have a bit of a cold, in order to alert Anja, who is waiting inside.

> As you enter Ragnar's house, you see a beautiful young woman standing by a large stone fireplace. Her hair is golden blond, and her eyes are clear blue. A finely ornamented light blue cape is draped over her shoulders, and she has several gold bracelets on her wrists. She is wearing a necklace of thin engraved gold disks. A dagger in a finely crafted sheath hangs from a belt around her waist.
>
> The woman looks intently at you as you file into the room. Her eyes seem to flash in the light from the fire as her gaze slowly goes from person to person.

Ragnar asks the PCs to remain quiet and still until Anja is ready to greet them. (He does not explain what she is doing.)

Anja (priestess of Sif): AL CG; AC 7; MV 12; C5; hp 21; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 11, D 17, C 13, I 12, W 15, Ch 16; ML 14; *dagger +3*. Spells: *bless, detect magic, command, protection from evil, sanctuary; heat metal, hold person, know alignment* (×2, one has been cast); *prayer*.

Anja is a priestess of Sif, the goddess of excellence and skill, who looks after young, promising warriors. Anja is quite proficient at arms herself. (She can use any blade weapon.)

As a priestess of Sif, Anja can be a

demanding person, quick to point out others' faults and to give advice on how they should improve. She may seem cold and haughty at first, but this soon changes once she gets to know the PCs.

Anja is Ulvmard's only child, and the only person for whom he still feels any affection. She loves her father in return, but she is ashamed of what he has become. She is convinced that, if only the *iron orb* could be taken away from him, he would soon become his old self again. Anja loves Ragnar, whom she hopes to marry once all this is over.

Anja cast a *know alignment* spell shortly before the PCs came in. (She was alerted by Ragnar's cough.) She will be frustrated if she is unable to detect any of the PCs' alignments and will make another attempt later, preferably with the PCs' permission.

When Anja is done, Ragnar introduces her as his wife (not true, yet). He does not mention that she is Ulvmard's daughter. Anja explains her strange behavior when the PCs first entered the house:

> "Please excuse my rude behavior when you came in. I felt it necessary to cast a spell to see if you were telling the truth about who you are. You are very late. We had expected you much earlier."

Anja is referring to the time that has passed since the messenger was sent south with a request for assistance.

Once this confusion has been sorted out (or if the PCs play along), she tells the PCs about the *iron orb* and what has happened to Ulvmard (as detailed in "For the Dungeon Master"). Ragnar tells them about the iron warrior Ulvmard is building to use against the dwarves (as described in "Treachery of the Dwarves").

Anja continues:

> "Since coming under the influence of the orb, high priest Ulvmard has become an evil, mean-spirited man, completely unlike his old self. But I can tell you this: the orb is corrupting him against his will.
>
> "Alas, he is powerless to resist it. On a few occasions I have seen him remove the orb from its position above his head. He can be without it for a while, but it never takes long before the craving for it becomes too strong to withstand and he puts it back. No one else can remove the orb, for there is a magical link between him and the orb as long as he remains conscious. Normal sleep does not seem to affect the link, but I believe magically induced sleep, or unconsciousness, could."

The resistance has devised a plan to steal the *orb* from Ulvmard the next day, when he arrives at the temple to perform a ceremony. They did not have time to organize an attempt to take it during the speech he gave this evening. Anja explains that this plan involves casting *command* spells on Ulvmard during the ceremony, to render him unconscious. The PCs, along with other resistance members, must keep Ulvmard's personal guards busy until a spell succeeds and Ragnar can take the *orb*.

It should be obvious to the PCs that the plan is not well thought out and is probably very dangerous. For one thing, Anja has no idea what the exact powers of the *orb* are. She has seen Ulvmard use it to become *invisible* once, and she knows he can use it to magically travel (*teleport*), but she does not know what more it is capable of. She is open to suggestions for alternative plans by the PCs, however.

Before discussion on details of the plan, or alternative plans, goes on for too long, the following event occurs.

Unfortunately for Anja, the *orb* is functioning as a scrying device (among its many other uses). Ulvmard has recently come to suspect that Anja may be plotting against him, and has been keeping an eye on her. His love for her has enabled him to resist the *orb*'s commands to kill her—so far. Alarmed at seeing Anja talking to the PCs, Ulvmard sent his men to Ragnar's house to eliminate the foreigners.

> Suddenly the door to the house is kicked open, and several warriors pour into the room with their weapons drawn, yelling, "Kill the foreigners, by Thor!"

The PCs will automatically be surprised unless they posted guards outside Ragnar's house.

These eight **elite warriors** (hp 35 (×2), 33, 32, 30, 31, 28, 24; see "The Temple" for complete statistics) are part of Ulvmard's personal guard. They focus their attacks on the PCs, ignoring Ragnar as much as possible.

Anja retreats to the rear of the house, trying to stay out of sight. One of the warriors spots her, however, and yells her name. He seems surprised to see her here. Anja remains inactive for the duration of the battle unless Ragnar is seriously threatened, in which case she casts a *hold person* spell on his opponents.

If the PCs are defeated, Anja orders the warriors (using a *charm* spell, if necessary) to let her make sure the PCs are dead. In fact, she does what she can to restore wounded PCs, focusing her efforts on saving any priests in the group. When questioned about the visiting foreigners, she pretends ignorance that the PCs are enemies of Ulvmard.

If the PCs win, Anja steps forward again after the battle. If Ragnar has been wounded, she tends to him first while revealing her true identity.

> "Yes, one of the men recognized me. I am not Ragnar's wife, at least not yet. I am Ulvmard's daughter.
>
> "You must all flee Tallborg immediately. My father must already know of our plan, and he knows you are here now as well. The ceremony tomorrow will undoubtedly be canceled. He will not present us with another opportunity to get at the orb before the iron warrior is completed.
>
> "Our only hope is for you to find him in the mine. Ragnar will show you the way. There are others, besides the dwarves and a few of us Northmen, who oppose Ulvmard. You may meet them on your way. Do not let your prejudices get in the way of accepting their help.
>
> "You must leave quickly now, before more men come and a general alarm is sounded. May Sif guide your way.
>
> "Oh, but one more thing. When you find my father, please take only the orb, not his life as well."

Anja will not go into any further details about who the "others" she mentions are, out of fear that Ulvmard might somehow be listening. (She is beginning to realize the extent of his powers.) Ragnar seems slightly surprised at her mention of others who oppose Ulvmard. (He does not know who they are.)

If the PCs are concerned about Anja's safety, she assures them she will be fine. She says Ulvmard has fallen far, but not far enough to consider harming her.

Ragnar still seems worried for Anja's sake, but he quickly proceeds to gives

each PC a pair of skis and a staff from a rack on one wall. After giving Anja a kiss and a lengthy hug, he quickly departs, urging the PCs to hurry along. (They need not put on their skis until they have left the city.)

Ragnar suggests they all try scaling the wall near his house instead of heading for the nearest gate. Alarm horns can already be heard from that direction. (Extra guards are being summoned to the city gates—12 more at each gate.) An alternative approach is to climb up a guard tower along the wall and knock out the guard there. From the guard tower, it is an easy matter to lower a rope down the other side of the wall.

The Mountains

Once outside Tallborg, Ragnar has everyone put on their skis. This requires a skiing proficiency check (see sidebar) for each PC. He leads the PCs along the main trail (area A) to the mines in the mountains north of the city. Darkness has fallen, and the air is getting very cold. Fortunately, the sky is clear and the moon is almost half full, providing enough light to see.

Ragnar is taking the PCs to a secret tunnel that lies not far from the city. The tunnel leads through the mountains and exits close to the entrance to the mine (area H). Besides being a shortcut to the mine, the tunnel is also large enough to allow the group to spend the night (in order to rest and regain spells).

A. Mine Trail. The first portion of the trail is well traveled, with ruts that show the passage of large carts and sleighs. Since it is late, no one else is in sight.

B. Fork. After an hour of skiing (roughly 2 miles), Ragnar turns off the mine trail onto a smaller trail that travels west and climbs upward (requiring another skiing proficiency check).

C. Snow Spiders.

You've been skiing west for nearly three hours, since leaving the main trail to the mines, when Ragnar abruptly turns north, heading up a steep slope toward a sheer cliff face several hundred yards away.

Suddenly the air is filled with flying powder as snow-covered rocks sprout legs and shoot toward you. Ragnar yells, "Snow spiders!"

Snow spiders (11): INT animal; AL N; AC 2; MV 18; HD 3+3; hp 18 (×4), 16, 15 (×2), 14 (×2), 13, 11; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SA bite causes paralysis unless save vs. poison, −6 on victims' surprise rolls due to camouflage and jump attack; SD immune to cold; SZ M; ML 9; XP 650; new monster.

Snow spiders thrive in arctic climates. Their metabolisms generate enough internal heat to enable them to survive the cold. They are most closely related to the more common huge spider. Like such spiders, they prefer to hide and wait for their prey, leaping up to 30' through the air to attack. They can run on top of the snow at their full movement rate.

The spiders attempt to drag fallen skiers to their nest (area E). Two spiders are required to carry each fallen PC, which reduces their movement rate to 9.

D. Cliff Face. A narrow opening is barely visible in the sheer cliff face some 300' straight up. A thin ledge runs along the cliff about halfway up to the cave. Ragnar suggests he climb up first, and then help the PCs up using ropes. The cliff surface counts as "rough with ledges" and "slightly slippery" for the purpose of climbing it (+15% modifier to base chance, rate is ½; see the *Player's Handbook*, pages 122-123).

When two PCs have reached the ledge where Ragnar is standing, another **snow spider** (hp 12) peeks out from the cave entrance above and scurries down to attack them. Ragnar cannot defend himself if he is busy helping a third PC climb up.

E. Tunnel Entrance. Only young snow spiders remain in the tunnel. Anyone entering the tunnel is greeted by several of these smaller, harmless spiders (unless a *fire ball*, for instance, is used to first clear it out).

The tunnel stretches nearly two miles through a high mountain, exiting on the other side at area G. The tunnel is 15' wide along its length and slopes upward steeply, rising some 3,000' during its course.

The floor of the tunnel is littered with the bones of small animals (mostly snow hares). The tunnel interior is cold, and a freezing wind blows through from the far end. Ragnar suggests that the heroes proceed inward to find a more comfortable place to set up camp for the night.

F. Skeletons. Pieces of two humanoid skeletons lie spread out among the rubbish at this spot. One skeleton is human, the other is dwarven. Both have iron manacles locked around their leg bones. They were slaves who managed to escape from the mines a few months ago, but had the misfortune of running into the snow spiders.

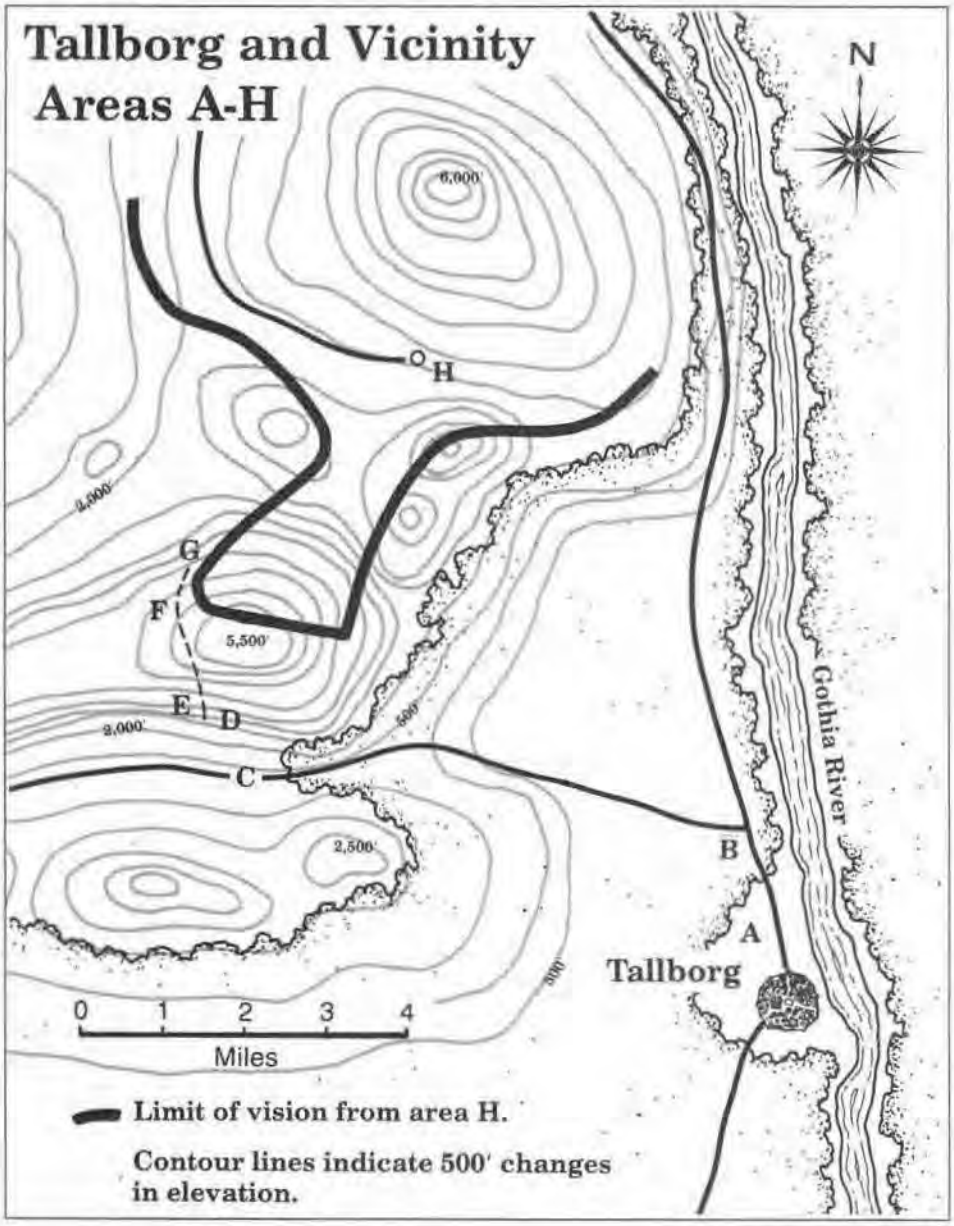
Skiing Proficiency

Skiing proficiency is based on Dexterity, with a modifier of +3. Proficient skiers can travel across snow-covered terrain quickly; normal movement rate on relatively level terrain is 15. Speeds of up to two or even three times that rate can be reached skiing downhill, depending on the steepness of the slope.

Adventurers must make proficiency checks when they attempt particularly difficult feats, such as racing at high speeds down slopes, jumping over chasms, or other fancy skiing. Proficiency checks are also required when engaging in combat (see below).

Characters without skiing proficiency may still try to ski. Proficiency checks are made against unmodified Dexterity scores, however, and are required more often. An initial check is required just to stand on the skis. Once the character starts moving, another check is required. If a check fails, the person falls and must start over by finding his balance again. Once someone has gotten the hang of it (succeeded with both checks), no further checks are required for level movement. Additional checks must be made to ski downhill, come to a stop, turn, climb a steep slope, etc. Movement rates for inexperienced skiers are equal to their normal movement rate on foot (12 or lower), which is still better than walking through deep snow at one-third to one-half normal movement rate.

Engaging in melee while on skis requires a successful proficiency check each round to avoid falling, unless the skier stands absolutely still (negating any Dexterity bonuses to armor class). Attack rolls for characters without skiing proficiency suffer a −1 penalty, and armor class is one step worse (but never worse than AC 10).



This area offers some protection from the cold wind blowing through the tunnel. Once the PCs exit the tunnel on the other side, there is no place for them to safely rest before they reach Ulvmard's mine.

Ragnar has no intention of accompanying the PCs into the mine. He says he must go back to Tallborg to see that no harm comes to Anja. He will stay with the PCs as long as they remain in the tunnel, however.

G. Tunnel Exit.

> Beyond the exit from the tunnel lies a very steep, snow-covered slope downward. Ragnar says the mine entrance lies to the north, partially obscured by two sharp peaks rising in that direction.

Torches light the area around the mine entrance (area H) at night. The entrance is too far away for the PCs to see any details without using spells or magical devices. If such means are used to enhance vision, the PCs see huge lumbering shapes occasionally move in front of the torches. Ragnar thinks they might be giants. The scene is otherwise quiet.

In daylight, the PCs can see movement at the mine entrance, but it is impossible to tell what kind of creatures are there or what they are doing.

If the PCs magically enhance their vision, read aloud the following:

> You can see four frost giants sitting in a circle in front of the mine entrance, enjoying some food as they watch a steady stream of humans coming and going. Several of the humans appear to be chained to sleds that they haul to and from the mine.

The line drawn on the Tallborg Area map roughly indicates the limit of vision from the mine entrance. Persons south of the line are hidden from the view of anyone at the entrance.

The slope down to the level of the mine entails a drop of roughly 3,000'. The first part of the slope is very steep, approaching 30°. Below that section, the slope slowly levels off. Plenty of half-hidden rocks dot the slope, and the many small, sudden drops could easily throw an inexperienced skier off balance. Skiing down the slope during the night is nearly impossible.

Each PC must make an initial skiing proficiency check when setting out down the slope. Further checks are required when the PC tries to turn, stop, or undertake any other action. A PC who falls while skiing down the steep mountainside will tumble down the slope until coming to a stop against a boulder or falling into a crack in the rock and ice. A tumble causes 2-12 hp damage.

When the first PCs have begun skiing down the mountain, six winter wolves run out onto the slope below and rush toward them to attack. The wolf pack belongs to the frost giants at the mine entrance (see area H).

Winter wolves (6): INT average; AL NE; AC 5; MV 18; HD 6; hp 49, 31, 29, 27, 20, 19; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SA frost breath once every 10 rounds causes 6-24 hp damage to target within 10'; SD immune to cold; SZ L; ML 13; XP 975; MM/362. Fire-based attacks cause an additional +1 per die of damage. The wolves can run unhindered on the densely packed snow of the slope.

H. Mine Entrance. A steady stream of slaves dragging heavily laden sleds enters the mine, and another line of slaves pulls empty sleds in the opposite direction. Northmen miners enter and

exit occasionally.

The frost giants guarding the entrance have been alerted and know that intruders may try to enter the mine. If the PCs approach the entrance head on and in plain view, the giants wait until they come within 200 yards and then begin throwing boulders at the party.

If the PCs use some other tactic to approach the entrance, such as *invisibility* (although *invisible* people still leave tracks in the snow), they may get much closer before being discovered. Unless the PCs somehow disguise themselves as slaves or miners (or are *invisible*), they will definitely be noticed and attacked when they arrive at the entrance.

Three rounds into a battle between the giants and the PCs, the giants' last **winter wolf** (hp 23) emerges from its lair (area 1 of the mine) to join the fight.

Frost giants (5): INT low-average; AL CE; AC 0; MV 12; HD 14; hp 67, 66, 64, 63, 54; THAC0 7; #AT 1; Dmg 2d8 +9 (giant battle axe); SA hurl rocks up to 200 yards for 2-20 hp damage; SD immune to cold; SZ H; ML 14; XP 7,000; MM/140. The giants can readily walk, and even run, through the snow.

Stenkross is the leader of the frost giants. The giants have agreed to serve as guardians of the mine entrance in exchange for 5,000 gp.

If the PCs are defeated (or surrender), the giants bind them up and haul them into their cavern (area 1) in hopes of later collecting a bounty from Ulvmard. Slaves are permitted to tend to the PCs' wounds (in case Ulvmard wants to talk to them). One or two of the slaves will help the PCs in whatever way they can (by discretely digging through their backpacks to find *healing* potions, for instance).

If the frost giants are defeated, several slaves approach the PCs, begging to be freed so they can return home. Most of the slaves come from the southern kingdoms. A few are Northmen, though none of these can speak Common.

The sleds that the slaves are hauling into the mine are laden with iron ingots. The slaves unload the sleds in area 4 (at the end of the entrance passage) and drag the empty sleds back to pick up more iron at a nearby foundry. They do not know what happens to the iron they unload, except that other slaves haul it farther into the mine.

Several Northmen miners, obvious by their lack of leg manacles and their better clothing and tools, also stand at the entrance to the mine, getting some fresh air. Although not slaves, the miners are forced to work without compensation (except for food). They cannot speak Common.

If a charismatic PC reminds the miners how badly they have been treated under Ulvmard (working long hours without pay, in constant fear of saying what they truly feel about the insane war against the dwarves), some miners might be swayed to side with the PCs.

The miners can tell the PCs about the deeper level of the mine ("The Ruins"), where strange ruins were discovered a year ago. The *iron orb* that Ulvmard now possesses was found buried among the rubble of these ruins (see area 9). None of the miners know anything about the mine beyond area 9.

Neither the slaves nor the miners at the entrance knows anything about the iron warrior or about Ulvmard's whereabouts. They have never seen the high priest in the mine.

Slaves: AL any; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level humans; hp 3; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 5; unarmed.

Miners: AL any; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level humans; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 9; pick, dagger.

The Mine

All mine tunnels are 5'-10' wide and 8' high, making it difficult for the giants guarding the entrance to go beyond area 1. Some tunnels slope gently downward, as indicated by arrows on the map; each arrow represents a 20'-drop in height. Unless otherwise noted in the text, the slopes are difficult to detect except by dwarves, gnomes, and other characters with similar abilities.

Ulvmard is well aware of the PCs' arrival in the Tallborg area (as proven by the attack on Ragnar's home). Although he doubts they pose a serious threat against him and his plans (or rather, the *orb*'s plans), he has taken the precaution of alerting all the guards and duergar that the PCs may appear soon. The guards' orders are to kill or capture the PCs at any cost and by any means necessary. Ulvmard makes a successful scrying attempt on the PCs soon after they enter the mine, and alerts the guards. The PCs have normal chances of detecting his scrying (see page 165 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

Guards and Slaves

The mine is a busy, dusty, noisy place. Many slaves and miners work in the tunnels and passages, hacking out iron ore and hauling it down to the next level. Possible events are listed in the "Random Encounters" sidebar. A check is required once every 2-3 rounds if the PCs are standing still, otherwise whenever the PCs approach a fork in the tunnel. The PCs might detect the noise or light of an encounter before they reach the actual location. Unless otherwise noted in the text, all mine tunnels are dark.

The mine guards are familiar with areas 1-15 of the mine. They are difficult to sway to the PCs' cause, but not impossible if the PCs make a convincing argument (including, perhaps, a show of strength).

Guards: AL CN; AC 4; MV 9; F3; hp 17 each unless otherwise noted; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 11; XP 120; splint mail, battle axe, dagger, alarm horn.

The sound of an alarm horn or major battle attracts 2-4 guards, who arrive to investigate in 1-2 rounds.

Most slaves, being from the southern kingdoms, have no difficulty communicating with the PCs, although they might initially be hesitant to do so until they are certain of the PCs' good intentions. When they realize the PCs have come to free them, they are ecstatic. A few slaves turn on their former guards with their picks, or even bare hands, to take revenge for past mistreatment. Others offer to follow the PCs farther into the mine to help them in whatever way they can. Still others fall on their knees and cry, thanking the PCs over and over again.

A few slaves speak the language of the Northmen (all slaves know at least a few words of the language, enough to understand commands) in addition to Common, and can act as translators for the PCs if necessary. Northman slaves know little or no Common.

The slaves have no knowledge of the mine beyond area 13.

The Drow Elves

Soon after the PCs enter the mine, they are spotted by a scouting party of drow elves (see area 7) who are lurking in the mine.

The drow are worried about Ulvmard's plans. They are not too keen on having a major war break out at the moment, or on seeing the regional

Random Encounters
(Roll 2d6)

2. **Whipping:** A slave screams as he is whipped by a guard. Another guard stands nearby holding a torch. The slave was trying to (choose one): find food (such as fungus or a rat), escape, hide from guards in order to avoid work.

3. **Slave group:** A group of 5-10 slaves carrying picks is being led by one guard carrying a torch.

4. **Group of miners:** 10 (nonslave) Northmen miners at work.

5. **Rats:** A pack of rats is swarming over a piece of refuse lying on the floor. They ignore the PCs (briefly moving out of the way if necessary).

6. **Slave miners:** Farther down the tunnel, a large group of 11-20 slaves is hacking away at the rock with picks. They are supervised by 1-3 guards standing nearby. Torches set in holders in the tunnel wall provide light.

7. **No encounter.**

8. **Slave work gang:** Four slaves are heading for area 13, carrying large sacks of iron ore on their backs. A fifth slave carries a torch in front of the others.

9. **Dead guard patrol:** Two guards lie on the tunnel floor. One has been cut down by a sword from behind. A black crossbow bolt protrudes from the other's neck. The bolt is a drow elf bolt, dipped in sleeping poison. The guards were killed by drow elves secretly providing assistance to the PCs—see area 7 of "The Mine."

10. **Slaves with cart:** Three slaves are pulling a cart laden with (choose one depending on location): barrels of water, ore, iron ingots. One of them carries a torch.

11. **Mysterious shadow:** One of the PCs sees a shadowy figure moving in the mine tunnel ahead (or behind). It is gone before the other PCs can be alerted. The PC actually glimpsed one of the drow elves lurking in the mine tunnels (see area 7).

12. **Unsafe tunnel:** The frantic pace of mining over recent months has forced the Northmen to cut corners in terms of safety. From 1-3 large stone blocks suddenly drop from the ceiling of the tunnel. Each block causes 2-20 hp damage to anyone standing beneath unless a Dexterity check is successful. A dwarf or gnome might be able to detect this danger.

balance of power upset. They have been playing a delicate game of balance and deception: keeping Ulvmard thinking he has their support against the dwarves, while supplying information on Ulvmard's plans, and progress on the construction of the iron warrior, to the dwarves (and to Anja).

The drow know the iron warrior is nearing completion. The group presently in the mine was sent out to prevent this from happening. They are led by a drow priestess named Remy, who met with Anja once at a secret meeting arranged by the dwarves. In fact, Anja was referring to the drow elves when she mentioned that "others" might be able to assist the PCs.

Remy and her group sneaked into the mine during the night, a few hours before the PCs entered. Since then, they have been mapping this level's major tunnels and caverns, trying to find the chamber where the iron warrior is being built. They have also scouted out the strength of the guard force and the location of other defenses (such as monsters and traps) in the mine.

Initially, the drow remain hidden from the PCs, observing them and seeing to it that any guards they encounter do not have a chance to sound the alarm (see area 4). The PCs eventually encounter the drow at area 7.

1. Frost Giant Lair.

Five large beds of hides and pine branches rise 6' above the floor of this chamber. Beside each bed sits a large, filthy sack bulging with bulky contents. Immediately to the right of the entrance is a smaller bed of branches.

The sacks contain throwing rocks and a few personal odds and ends belonging to the giants, including coins totalling to 5,000 gp, 117 sp, and 2,788 cp.

The sixth bed is where the seven winter wolves sleep. Matted clumps of white hair can be found among the branches.

2. Storage Room. This chamber contains sacks of torches. These torches are used to light area 3 and many other areas of the mine.

3. Main Passage. The passage slopes noticeably downward, descending 40' before it reaches area 4.

Flickering torches sit in holders at regular intervals along the length of this passage. Ahead, a group of slaves struggles to haul an empty sled over the uneven stone floor.

The slaves are not part of the work force living in the mine (they never go farther in than area 4). They react as described in "Guards and Slaves," page 59.

4. Central Cavern.

The passage opens up into a large cavern illuminated by dozens of torches along the walls. At the far end of the chamber, three slaves are loading iron ingots from a large pile on the floor onto a wooden cart, under the watchful supervision of three guards. Two more guards stand to either side of the entrance you came through.

The ringing clangor of miners at work deeper in the mountain echoes through the many tunnels leading into this chamber.

If the PCs are dressed as Northmen, the guards ask who they are and what their errand is in the mine. If the PCs fail to provide a satisfactory answer (or are easily identifiable as non-Northmen), four of the **guards** (hp 23, 18, 16, 15, 10) immediately attack while the fifth attempts to blow an alarm horn. All the slaves duck for cover.

Miraculously, the guard holding the alarm horn falls to the ground before he has a chance to sound the alert. He has been struck by a poisoned crossbow bolt courtesy of the drow in the northwest tunnel. If the PCs inspect the guard's unconscious body, they can find the small black bolt.

When all is quiet again, the slaves reappear from their hiding places. They are one of several groups running the same route, hauling iron ingots from this cavern to the ore transporter room (area 13). They can describe the transporter there but have no idea where it leads.

The slaves have no idea who shot the guard with the alarm horn. They thought the PCs did it.

5. Pool of Water.

Barrels line the edge of a pool of water in this chamber. A slave is busy using a bucket to fill a barrel with water from the pool as another

slave struggles to load a full barrel onto a small cart. A third slave holds a torch so that the others can see.

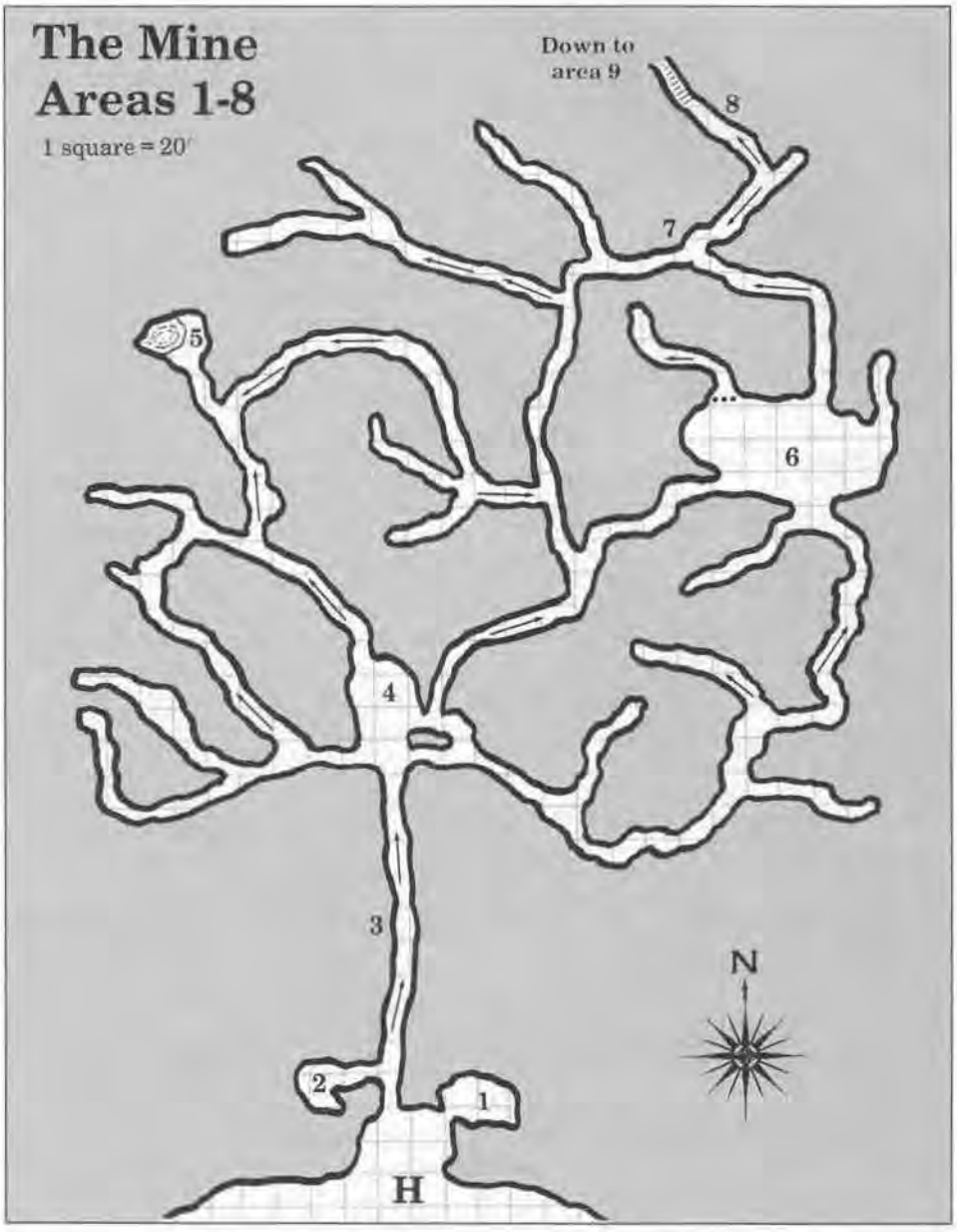
The water in the pool is clear and cool. It is used as drinking water by the slaves, miners, and guards throughout the mine.

6. Main Slave Cavern. The PCs hear agitated voices mixed with occasional coughs and moans as they approach this cavern.

A heavy stench fills the air in this very large, dimly lit cavern. Much of the floor is covered with slaves lying on simple beds of straw. Most appear asleep. Many look sick and worn out, and a few are coughing badly. Four guards play cards around a table in the east end of the chamber. Two of them seem to be engaged in a heated argument over the last hand dealt. Four more guards sit on their bunks nearby, watching the brawl.

A large fire burns in a fireplace dug out of the wall near the guards. Smoke from the fire rises to the cavern ceiling, where it escapes through cracks in the rock. A large cauldron hangs over the fire, with something boiling inside it. Next to the fireplace are several barrels and a large pile of firewood.

Several tunnels lead out of the cavern, one of them barred by a heavy iron gate. A young man sits on the floor behind the bars, his face in his hands as if he were very tired, or crying.



The **guards** (hp 27, 25 (×3), 22, 20, 11, 8) immediately attack any obvious intruders. If the PCs are disguised as Northmen, the guards ask them what they want. If the PCs cannot provide a good answer, the guards attack and attempt to sound the alarm. See area H for slave statistics.

The drow observe the PCs from the passage leading to area 7, providing assistance by silencing guards with crossbow bolts from the shadows if needed. If the PCs pursue the drow, the dark elves quickly retreat to area 7.

There are bunks here for an additional 16 guards, who are currently on duty in the mine. A small chest beside each bunk holds personal belongings and other items such as food, a few small weapons (daggers, hand axes, etc.), and small amounts of coins. Altogether there are 42 gp, 410 sp, and 322 cp.

The slaves work in 16-hour shifts during each 24-hour period. Ulvmard is kind enough to allow each shift seven hours of sleep and another hour to eat and rest, so at any time there are 60-70 slaves in the cavern (out of the total population of roughly 200).

The cauldron in the fireplace holds gruel, the only food the slaves are given to eat. The gruel is actually quite nourishing, but bland. The barrels contain the mixture used to make the gruel. Among the stacks of firewood are also several sacks containing torches.

The barred northwest tunnel leads to the dwelling of a neo-otyugh. This tunnel is used as a garbage dump. Anders, the young man sitting behind the bars, tried to steal a weapon from one of the guards. His punishment for this crime is death—as soon as the neo-otyugh discovers him. One of the guards currently playing cards carries the key to the gate.

Anders knows the way down to the transporter in area 13. He has seen the duergar fortress once, very briefly, from area 14. He describes what he saw as "an immense fortress sitting on a cliff in a giant cavern filled with fire." He

will be very grateful if the PCs save his life and will eagerly accompany and help them.

Most of the slaves are from the southern kingdoms (see "Guards and Slaves"). Some have wounds or diseases they beg the PCs to cure.

Neo-otyugh: INT average; AL N; AC 0; MV 6; HD 11; hp 52; THAC0 9; #AT 3; Dmg 2-12/2-12/1-3; SA grab, disease; SD never surprised; SZ L; ML 17; XP 4,000; MM/283.

Anders: AL NG; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 3; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 10; unarmed.

7. Ambushed Guards.

Two guards lie face down on the floor at this fork in the mine tunnels. Both have black crossbow bolts protruding from their backs. An extinguished torch lies nearby, still smoldering.

Suddenly you glimpse something moving in the shadowy darkness of the mine tunnels. A dark figure steps into view from the northeast tunnel. It is a female drow elf clad in black mesh armor and wearing a black, featureless cloak. Simultaneously, several male drow warriors appear behind the female [in the west or southeast tunnel, depending on the PCs' location]. There also seems to be some movement in the tunnel behind you.

The female drow shows her empty hands and nods her head in greeting.

The two drow behind Remy (the female) and the three visible in the other tunnel have short swords in hand. A third drow remains hidden behind Remy, with crossbow in hand. Two more lurk in the shadows of the mine tunnel behind the PCs, ready to use their crossbows if necessary.

If the PCs attack the drow, Remy yells, "Fools!" and brings up *darkness* around herself. The drow then attempt to escape into the mine tunnels, slipping off in different directions. If they succeed, they later follow the PCs at a safe distance until they find Ulvmard (see area 37, "Sequence of Events," for their actions at that point). If the drow fail to escape (or become locked in battle with the PCs later) they fight fiercely, using their spells and abilities to inflict maximum damage on the PCs while preventing them from striking back. The drow use *darkness, levitate, suggestion, command,* poisoned crossbow bolts, etc.

Remy (drow elf priestess): AL CE; AC −4; MV 12; F7/C8; hp 43; THAC0 14; #AT 3/2; Dmg by spell or weapon type; SA *dancing lights, faerie fire, darkness, levitate, know alignment, detect magic, clairvoyance, detect lie, suggestion, dispel magic* (each once per day); SD +2 on all saving throws vs. spells, surprised only on a 1 on 1d10; S 16, D 18, C 15, I 15, W 17, Ch 15; MR 66%; ML 15; XP 7,000; MM/112-113; *short sword +2, drow chain mail +2, drow shield +2,* drow crossbow (see below), *drow cloak of elvenkind, drow boots of elvenkind.*

Spells: *command* (×2), *detect good, endure heat, darkness, charm person or mammal, find traps, hold person* (×2), *know alignment, dispel magic, prayer, protection from fire* (previously cast), *remove paralysis, cause serious wounds, free action.*

Elf, drow (8): INT 14; AL CE; AC 0; MV 12; F4; hp 29, 28 (×2), 27, 26, 25, 21, 19; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SA *dancing lights, faerie fire, darkness* (each once per day); SD +2 on all saving throws vs. spells, surprised only on a 1 on 1d10; S 15, D 16; MR 58%; ML 14; XP 1,400; MM/112-113; *short sword +1, drow chain mail +1, drow shield +1,* drow crossbow (1-3 hp plus sleep poison, −4 on save), *drow cloak of elvenkind, drow boots of elvenkind.*

If the PCs refrain from attacking the drow, Remy speaks in accented Common, which she hopes the PCs can understand:

"Greetings, humans! If you care for your lives and the success of your mission, you will hear what I have to say.

"We share a common enemy, the Northman high priest, Ulvmard. His plans cause us great concern, and we have come to stop him. You appear to be of the same mind.

"Although I realize our races might have disagreements over many issues, let us not waste blood and effort by trying to settle these problems here and now. I ask you to consider a temporary truce, a truce for the sake of defeating Ulvmard and averting a devastating and worrisome war between the Northmen and the dwarves.

"We could benefit from your skills, and you will surely need ours to succeed. We ask no price for this, only that you avoid getting in our way as much as possible.

"Since you are much slower and noisier than we are, it would be impractical for you to attempt to move with us through the mine. Instead, I propose we each pursue our common goal in our own way, assisting each other when needed. You may not see us again until we find Ulvmard, but be certain of this: When you confront Ulvmard and the iron orb, you will be glad to have us on your side."

See "The Drow Elves" for more information concerning the drow. Remy makes it very clear that the drow have no interest in acquiring the *iron orb* for themselves. They would prefer to see it destroyed, once and for all.

If the PCs accept Remy's proposal, the drow follow behind the party, staying out of sight and letting the PCs do most of the fighting. If an encounter gets out of hand, the drow assist the PCs by firing crossbow bolts from the shadows, casting spells, and the like. They also take care of any guards (or later, duergar) approaching the PCs from behind.

See area 37 for the drow elves' tactics during the encounter with Ulvmard.

8. Sloping Passage.

This passage slopes noticeably downward. Flickering torches along the walls cast their light on low steps spaced at irregular intervals. More light comes from below and farther ahead, where the passage appears to open into a wide corridor.

The Ruins

The stonework on this level dates back to the days when the duergar controlled the mountain. When the dwarves, led by their great hero Durin Ironfoot, finally defeated the duergar, most of what the duergar had built in the mountain was destroyed. Some structures survived, however, and Ulvmard has summoned a colony of duergar warriors and engineers to rebuild the ancient duergar fortress on this level.

The ruins were discovered by accident about a year ago. Northmen miners following a particularly rich vein of iron ore dug through an ancient wall into area 9.

9. Corridor. The ceiling in this corridor is 30' above the floor.

The roughly hewn passage you have been walking through suddenly opens into the side of a wide corridor with walls and floor of finely worked stone. Torches sit in holders along the walls of the corridor, which leads to a pair of 30'-tall bronze doors standing ajar to the north. A large chamber lies beyond them.

A short distance to the south, the corridor has collapsed. A wall of loose rocks and boulders blocks the passage. Some of the rocks seem oddly shaped, almost melted. There are signs of recent attempts to break through the blockage. Broken rocks litter the floor.

Closer inspection of the collapsed section reveals that most of the rocks once were subjected to extreme heat. Large amounts of pure iron are spread like mortar between the rocks, binding them together to form a compact mass. A narrow tunnel extends a few yards into the rocks. The *iron orb* was first found here; the iron in the rocks comes from the iron warrior the *orb* once animated.

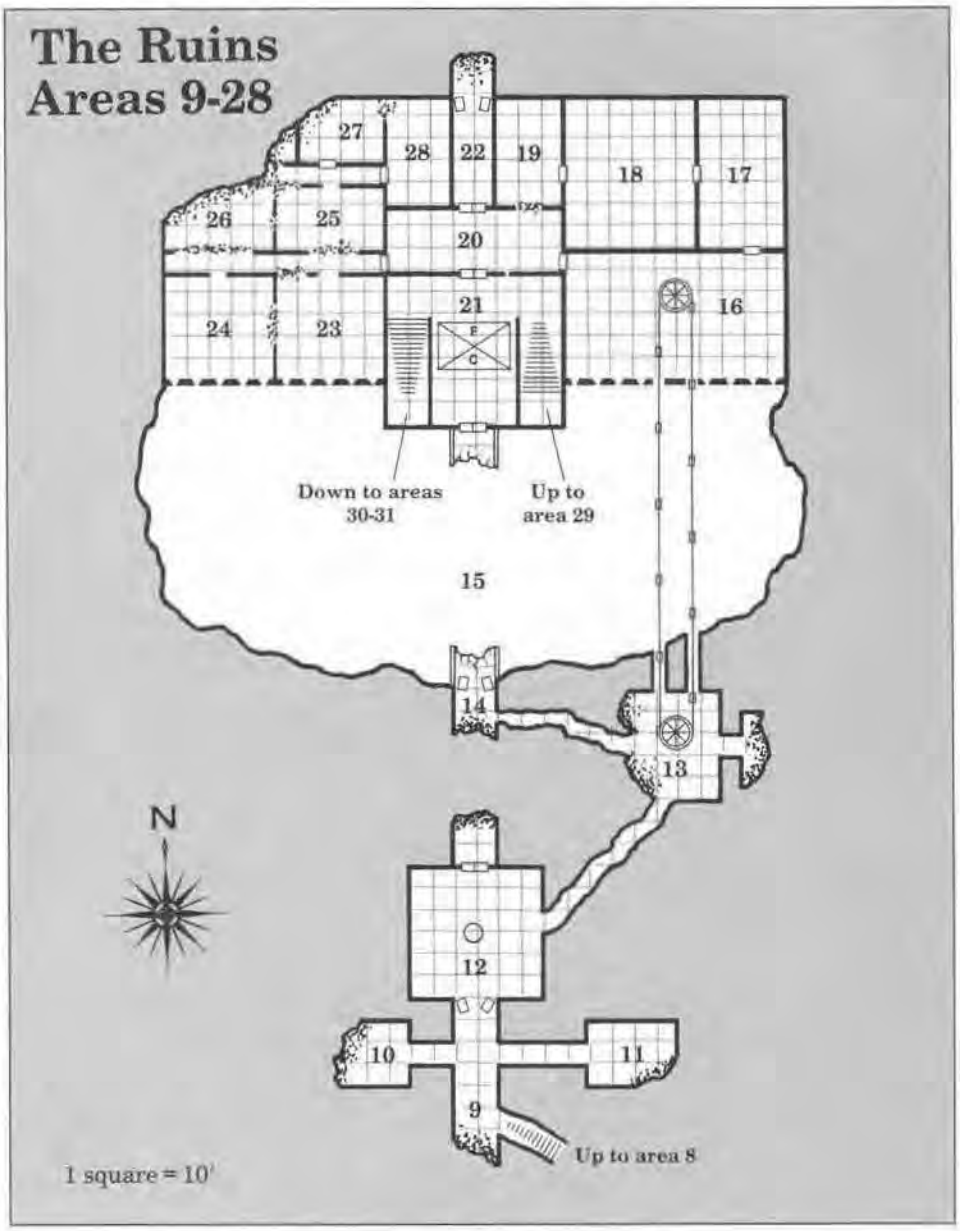
Two umber hulks lurk behind the rocks of the collapsed tunnel section. Ulvmard charmed them with the *orb* and placed them here as guardians, with orders not to attack slaves or guards. They attack the PCs as soon as they feel the vibrations of footsteps moving toward area 12 (or if the PCs become too curious and start digging among the rocks).

Umber hulks (2): INT average; AL CE; AC 2; MV 6, burrow 1-6; HD 8+8; hp 52, 47; THAC0 11; #AT 3; Dmg 3-12/3-12/1-10; SA *confusion* gaze and surprise; SZ L; ML 13; XP 4,000; MM/352.

If the umber hulks attack with surprise, opponents suffer −5 on their die rolls. The gaze of an umber hulk causes *confusion* unless a saving throw vs. spells is successful.

10. Storage Room. This damp room holds torches, two carts, and several barrels of water.

11. Guards' Room. Six two-level bunk beds line the walls of this room. All are currently empty. (All guards are on duty.) Chests by the beds contain food, drink, personal belongings, and a few coins amounting to 112 sp, and 237 cp.



12. Pedestal Chamber.

At the center of this large, dimly lit chamber is a 3'-high pedestal of black stone. Two stubs of bronze resembling the lower legs and feet of a statue stand on top of the pedestal. At the opposite end of the room are two closed 30'-tall bronze doors. Torches along the south and east walls illuminate a trail through the dirt and dust covering the floor, leading toward a roughly made tunnel opening in the east wall.

Voices echo from the tunnel opening, accompanied by a creaking and groaning sound, like wooden wheels turning over a rough surface. A strange, deep, rumbling noise also comes from that direction.

On the west side of the room, several rocks and large boulders lie on the floor, apparently fallen from the ceiling some 50' above your heads.

A bronze statue of a duergar warrior named Balki once stood on the pedestal. It was destroyed by the dwarves.

The rumbling noise comes from the transporter in area 13. The voices and other sounds are caused by a group of three young slaves pulling an empty cart behind them. They are on their way to area 4 to pick up a new load of iron ingots.

Before the slaves enter, ropers disguised as two of the boulders on the floor suddenly attack, lashing their tentacles at the PCs and targeting warriors (the ropers know they have little to fear from mages). Ulvmard recently placed the ropers here as guardians, with strict instructions not to attack slaves or guards.

Ropers (2): INT exceptional; AL CE; AC 0; MV 3; HD 12; hp 60, 49; THAC0 9; #AT 1 strand plus 1 bite; Dmg special/5-20; SA Strength drain; SD immune to lightning, half damage from cold, saves vs. fire at −4; MR 80%; SZ L; ML 15; XP 12,000; MM/304. Each roper has six strands.

When the slaves hear the sounds of battle, they carefully peek into the room instead of entering. Seeing the PCs fighting the ropers, they immediately turn back to area 13 to prevent the guards there from sounding the alarm.

13. Transporter. Built long ago by the duergar, the machine in this room has been restored to working order. It is powered from area 16.

The two **guards** (hp 10, 8) in this room are deeply involved in a game of checkers on the floor when the PCs arrive at area 12. They ignore sounds of battle coming from that area for one round. When the slaves who just left the room come running back (after seeing the PCs fighting the ropers), they throw themselves on the very surprised guards, knock them over and pin them to the floor before they have a chance to react.

Read the following description when the PCs finally enter the room:

> Three young slaves, their faces beaming with pride, stand watch over two guards lying on the floor near an opening in the east wall of this room.
>
> At the center of the room, a large metal wheel slowly revolves around a thick vertical axle, also of metal, sticking up from the floor. A thick wire "rope" enters the room through a narrow passage to the north, runs around the perimeter of the wheel, and exits again through another passage to the north. Man-sized metal baskets hang suspended from the wire, slowly moving forward as the wire is pulled around the wheel. The rotating wheel makes a steady rumbling noise.
>
> A large bell is attached to one of the supports holding the wheel and axle upright. A hammer hangs from a piece of rope next to the bell.
>
> The west wall of the room appears to have collapsed long ago. Wooden beams are braced against the large rocks and boulders that now form the wall, securing them in place. A narrow opening between two large boulders leads into a low tunnel to the west.

The slaves have no idea where the transporter goes but would like to find out, now that they have the chance.

If the PCs question the guards, they can learn, after some persuasion, about the fortress at the other end of the transporter, and the "special kind" of dwarves that live there. (The guards can describe the grey, emaciated features of the duergar.)

The baskets attached to the transporter wire are suspended roughly 5′ from the floor. The bottom of each basket drops open when a small lever attached to one side of it is pulled. A close inspection of the baskets is enough to discover the lever. The bottom closes again when it is lifted up against the basket. A simple latch holds it in place.

The baskets travel at a rate of 30′ per round. They are spaced 30′ apart (1 round apart). Each basket can hold only one person (two people if both are sitting on the basket's edges instead of hiding inside it).

The bell attached to the transporter is used to communicate with the duergar at the other end. Repeatedly striking the bell sounds the alarm.

Remy and the other drow elves (see area 7) follow immediately behind the PCs across the transporter. See area 16 for their actions once they reach the other side.

14. Bronze Doors. These ancient doors are badly corroded and stuck in place.

> A strange glow comes from beyond the tall bronze doors standing ajar to the north. The air is hot and has a slightly sulfurous odor to it.

15. Lava Cavern and Fortress.

> You step out onto a ledge high up on the south wall of a great cavern. Far below, a sea of lava slowly churns, casting its fiery glow on the cavern walls. The air is stiflingly hot and full of noxious fumes.
>
> The collapsed remains of a stone bridge reaches out into the cavern from the ledge. At the opposite side, another stump of the bridge leads up to two towering bronze doors set in the wall of a mighty fortress of gray stone.
>
> The glow from the lava below casts an eerie, menacing light on the fortress. Its forbidding walls meld with the surrounding cavern, giving it an impenetrable appearance. Rows of narrow arrow slits dot the walls, flanking a protruding towerlike structure that contains the entrance doors.
>
> To the east, you can see the cables of the transporter, with its suspended baskets, leading off into the fortress through openings in the wall.

The lava is roughly 500′ below the ledge where the PCs stand. The walls of the fortress are over 50′ high, except in the tower (areas 21 and 29), where they rise to a height of 80′. The walls extend all the way up to the cavern ceiling, leaving no gaps.

The duergar do not normally keep watch over the cavern, unless the alarm has been sounded or there is a lot of noise in the cavern (such as from a battle), in which case all the arrow slits quickly will be manned.

The cavern itself is inhabited by a group of margoyles. These stony creatures normally hide near the cavern ceiling until something attracts their attention. Flying PCs are attacked immediately (unless *invisible*). Adventurers riding the transporter have a 20% chance of being discovered, as long as they remain still and quiet inside their baskets (check individually for each PC). PCs sitting on the sides of baskets, or otherwise moving about or making noise, are automatically discovered. Once a person is discovered, the margoyles swoop down to investigate

the other baskets as well. It takes four rounds for the baskets to cross the cavern and enter the fortress.

Margoyles (6): INT low; AL CE; AC 2; MV 6, fly 12 (C); HD 6; hp 35, 31, 30, 27, 26, 22; THAC0 15; #AT 4; Dmg 1-6/1-6/2-8/2-8; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, camouflage; SZ M; ML 13; XP 975; MM/125 (gargoyle).

As long as the margoyles choose to remain hidden, they are nearly undetectable (80% chance) against the cavern walls.

Duergar Fortress

The fortress is solidly built of large blocks of stone. The ceiling height in all areas (except area 29) is a towering 50', allowing the iron warrior to be used in the fortress's defense.

16. Transporter Room. This encounter requires a great deal of work on the DM's part. Since all of the duergar in the room are *invisible* almost all the time, the DM must do most of the bookkeeping in secret.

Unless the alarm has been sounded in area 13, the duergar in this area are busy emptying the incoming baskets and moving the iron ingots and ore into separate piles for later transport down to the forges (areas 35 and 37). The room is only dimly lit by torches placed in holders along the walls, and by the red glow of the lava in the cavern outside coming in through the arrow slits.

The transporter is powered by four human slaves walking in an upright drive wheel (similar to a hamster's exercise wheel), connected to the transporter wheel by a series of gears. (See area H for slave statistics.)

A PC entering this area inside a transporter basket will be discovered as soon as a duergar pulls the lever on the basket that releases its bottom, depositing the PC onto a pile of iron ingots on the floor below.

Duergar (16): INT average; AL LE; AC 4; MV 6; HD 1+2; hp 7 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SA stealth gives −2 penalty to opponent's surprise die roll; can use *invisibility* and *enlargement* spells at will (level of magic use equal to hit points, up to level 20); SD +4 on all saves vs. spells, immune to paralysis, poison, and all *illusion/phantasm* spells; SZ S (M-L); ML 13; XP 420; MM/96-97; footman's pick, war hammer, chain mail, shield.

Duergar sergeants (4): HD 2+4; hp 15, 13, 11, 9; THAC0 17; XP 650; footman's pick, light crossbow, chain mail, shield; other statistics as for normal duergar, above.

Duergar lieutenants (2): AC 2; HD 4+8; hp 23, 20; THAC0 15; Dmg by weapon type; XP 1,400; short sword, war hammer, plate mail, shield; other statistics as for normal duergar, above.

Duergar Tactics: The first thing the duergar do when they discover the PCs is to use their innate ability to turn *invisible*. Only the first PC to enter the room will see how many duergar are present. Duergar are immune to all *illusion/phantasm* spells, including *invisibility*, so they can always see each other. A duergar who strikes an opponent becomes visible, but the duergar can become *invisible* again by spending one round doing nothing else (except moving a short distance, at the DM's discretion).

In the next round, the duergar all *enlarge* themselves (once again using their innate ability) to their maximum sizes. They grow an additional 10% in size for every hit point they possess. A 10-hp duergar could become twice his normal size; a 20-hp duergar could grow to three times his normal size. Their damage die rolls should be adjusted

correspondingly.

Next, several duergar attempt to sound the alarm bell attached to the transporter (identical to the one in area 13), while others fire their crossbows or attempt to sneak around the PCs to attack them from behind. A few try to reach the drive wheel to stop the slaves (by killing them if necessary). If the PCs manage to protect the slaves, they follow whatever orders the PCs give, as long as no duergar are close by to threaten them.

The duergar lieutenants (except for those on steeders, see below) stay at the rear, coordinating the attack. The best chance the duergar have is to overwhelm the PCs with their numbers (see overbearing rules in the *Player's Handbook*, page 98).

Sounding the Alarm: If the alarm is sounded, all duergar in the fortress become *invisible* and *enlarged* within two rounds. Thereafter, they begin arriving through the doors from areas 17 and 20 at a rate of 1d10+10 duergar per round until their morale fails or their numbers from each area (including area 18) have been exhausted. Some of those coming from area 20 are duergar lieutenants mounted on steeders. (The steeders are not *invisible*; see area 19 for statistics.) These riders attempt to jump in behind the PCs to attack.

If the PCs prevent the duergar from sounding the alarm, there is a 3-in-6 chance per round that the duergar in area 17 hear the battle anyway. This has the same effect as sounding the alarm. The chance increases to 4-in-6 if the PCs use noisy magic or otherwise cause a commotion.

Concluding the Battle: If the duergar morale fails, those remaining retreat to areas 23-26 for a last stand (but see below if the drow are present).

If the PCs are defeated by the duergar, they are stripped of their weapons and kept under watch in area 17. Nilglot, the duergar high priest, decides their fate once he returns from area 37, where the iron warrior is being completed. In this case, the PCs might be rescued by Remy and the other drow.

The drow stay hidden during the battle between the PCs and the duergar. As soon as possible, they leave the room and enter area 20, trying to remain undetected. The drow search areas 23-28 before joining up with the PCs again. If the duergar retreat to these areas, the drow ambush them (see areas 23-28).

17. Sleeping Quarters. The floor of this dimly lit chamber is packed with sleeping mats, leaving only a narrow path of clear space between the two entrances. If the alarm has not been sounded, many of the room's 88 mats are occupied by duergar resting or engaged in simple games (such as checkers or cards) to pass the time. Others sit together in small groups, chanting and droning. They are all impatiently awaiting word to go on the offensive against the dwarves once the iron warrior is fully functional.

Present in the room are six **duergar lieutenants** (hp 30, 29, 23, 22 (×2), 20), 12 **duergar sergeants** (hp 18, 15, 14 (×2), 13, 12 (×2), 11, 10 (×4)), and 48 **duergar** (hp 7 each). All are equipped as described in area 16.

18. Sleeping Quarters. A total of 132 duergar live in this large chamber, just as packed with sleeping mats as area 17.

Present in the room are 12 **duergar lieutenants** (hp 38, 30 (×2), 29, 25 (×3), 24, 23 (×2), 22, 19), 24 **duergar sergeants** (hp 20, 18, 17 (×5), 16 (×2), 15 (×3), 14 (×4), 13 (×2), 12 (×3), 10, 8, 7), and 96 **duergar** (hp 7 each).

Each of the 12 lieutenants is assigned a steeder, housed in area 19.

19. Steeder Stables. The duergar keep steeders, a form of giant spiders that they use as mounts. If the alarm has not been sounded, all steeders are present in this room. Twelve **duergar** (hp 7 each) from area 18 tend to them. The room is unlit.

Steeders (12): INT low; AL CE; AC 4; MV 12; HD 4+4; hp 20 each; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SA sticky attack to hold opponent; SD jump up to 240'; SZ L; ML 11; XP 975; MM/326-327 (Spider, giant).

20. Hall.

> Flaming torches along the length of this hall cast their light on fading murals that cover the walls and ceiling. The murals depict great battles between the duergar and the dwarves. One particularly vivid scene on the ceiling shows a colossal, golemlike creature of polished metal smashing through the walls of a dwarven fort. Hundreds of duergar stand ready to follow it through the breach.
>
> Two pairs of tall bronze doors sit in the north and south walls, across from each other. A hole has been opened in the north wall, next to the doors on that side.

21. Old Entrance Room. The doors from the cavern (area 15) are locked and barred. Ulvmard carries the keys. The locks are new and accessible only on the inside. The room is illuminated by torches placed in holders along the north wall.

On Ulvmard's orders, a *programmed illusion* spell was placed in the middle of this room (on top of the large trapdoor in the floor) in case unwanted visitors managed to force their way into the fortress. The spell is activated when the first PC enters the room (through the doors from areas 15 or 20).

> A tall man dressed in an elegant black robe stands in the middle of a large room. He is talking to a regally dressed duergar clad in finely crafted black chain mail, and wearing a brightly polished helmet on his head. A black orb, about 1' in diameter, floats in the air just above the man's head, moving as he moves. Two more duergar, evidently guards, stand nearby.

The illusion of Ulvmard (the human) turns its head in surprise when the PCs enter, but it soon begins to make the motions of casting a spell. The two illusory guards move in front of the image of Nilglot (the duergar high priest) to protect him.

As soon as two or more PCs move onto the trapdoor (see the map), it gives way. PCs standing on it fall 500' to the floor of area 31 below. The fall causes 20d6 hp damage; a PC who survives the falling damage must then make a saving throw to avoid death by massive damage (see *DMG*, page 75). The programmed illusion instantly terminates when the trapdoor gives way. Any PC close to the edge of the trapdoor must make a Dexterity check to grab hold of the edge and avoid a fall. Of course, this means letting go of whatever the PC has in her hands.

The trap causes enough noise when it opens to attract duergar from area 19 to investigate (unless the PCs have already fought the duergar there).

A smaller trapdoor is set in the ceiling above the one in the floor. Its outline is plainly visible from below. This trapdoor leads up to area 29.

22. Corridor.

The surface of the stone in the walls and floor of this corridor seems to have once been melted. Rivulets of melted stone have trickled down the walls and collected in pools on the floor. Toward the far end of the corridor, the badly melted remains of two bronze doors lean against the walls. Behind them, the corridor continues for a short distance until it runs into a wall of rocks and debris.

The collapsed passage once led onward for quite a distance, into territory now occupied by the dwarves. Ulvmard plans to send the iron warrior into this passage, to attack the dwarves.

23-28. Repairs in Progress. Areas 23-28 of the fortress were damaged when the dwarves defeated the duergar many years ago. The duergar have been busy repairing the walls of these areas since they reclaimed the fortress. Each area is described separately below.

If the duergar retreat to these areas while the drow are present there (see area 16), the drow will ambush them. If this happens, the PCs will find dead duergar throughout the area.

23. Duergar Technicians' Room. This room is inhabited by duergar technicians currently working on the iron warrior in area 37. Their sleeping mats (20) and personal belongings lie on the floor, between crates and boxes holding tools and various mechanical devices (gears, wheels, links, pulleys, etc.)

24. Training Room. The duergar use this room for military training. Racks on the wall hold blunt weapons used in combat practice.

25. Ale and Food Storage.

Several large barrels line the walls of this room. The lids have been removed from some of the barrels, revealing what looks like pieces of dried mushrooms and fungi. An adjoining room is visible behind several large openings in the west wall of the room. You can see large colonies of mushrooms and other fungi growing on the walls and floor of the adjoining chamber.

A few of the barrels contain duergar ale of excellent quality.

26. Fungus Farm. The fungi growing in this room are all edible and quite nourishing.

27. Guards' Chamber. This room is normally occupied by the personal guards of high priest Nilglot (see area 28). Two sleeping mats are laid out on the floor, together with small piles of personal belongings (including 1,337 gp and 214 sp).

The guards are currently with Nilglot in area 37.

28. High Priest Nilglot's Room. This room is furnished with a wooden bed, a mattress, a small table and chair, and an altar made of black, finely polished volcanic stone.

At the foot of the bed is a large, locked chest (protected with both a poison needle and a *fire trap* spell cast at 9th level). It contains 13,787 gp, 21,900 sp, 10 gems worth 1,000 gp, and 32 gems worth 100 gp (all payment from Ulvmard).

Nilglot is currently in area 37, helping Ulvmard supervise the completion of the iron warrior.

Lower Levels

The staircase runs from the fortress all the way down to "The Forge."

29. Crane Room.

A large crane occupies most of this room. Its massive timbers are reinforced with heavy iron bands and plating. A very long, heavy wire is rolled up on the crane's wire drum. From a hook at the end of the wire hangs a single metal basket, similar to the ones on the transporter. The basket hangs above a plainly visible trapdoor in the floor. A series of gears connects the drum to an upright drive wheel large enough for three or four humans to walk in side by side.

A dwarf, gnome, or any other PC skilled in construction can tell that the crane is capable of lifting extremely heavy loads (weighing several tons). The wire is long enough to reach down to area 31 (roughly 500').

30. Staircase. The staircase continues to spiral downward almost 500' around an open shaft. It makes six complete loops before it reaches the bottom, a distance of over 1,200' traveled. There are no handrails.

Several steps in the staircase are set to release spring-loaded pistons that shoot out from the wall, pushing the person stepping on the trigger over the edge of the staircase into the shaft. Victims fall to area 31, suffering 20d6 hp damage and requiring a saving throw to avoid death from massive damage. The stairs are rigged with four such traps in all, and each PC passing one has a 50% chance of activating it. The DM may determine the exact location of the four traps, though none of them is less than 200' from the bottom.

The Forge

31. Bottom of Staircase. The staircase ends in a room with a pair of tall iron doors. Standing in front of these doors is an iron golem. Its orders are to attack anyone coming down the staircase (except Nilglot, Ulvmard, and anyone accompanying them). The floor in the middle of the room is full of empty crates and barrels waiting to be hoisted up to area 21. This debris does not significantly break the fall of anyone dropping in from areas 21 or 30.

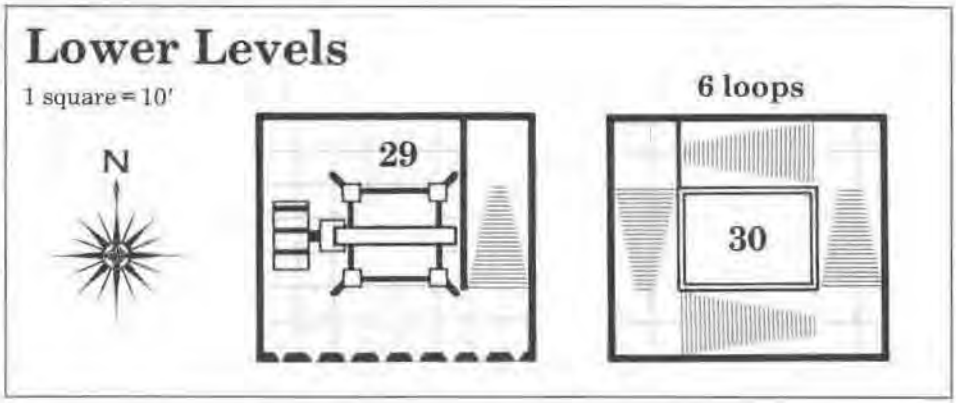
Golem, iron: INT non; AL N; AC 3; MV 6; HD 18; hp 80; THAC0 3; #AT 1; Dmg 4d10; SA poison cloud, once per seven rounds; SD +3 or better weapon to hit; immune to all spells except magical electrical attacks, which *slow* it for three rounds, and magical fire, which heals 1 hp per hit die of normal damage; SZ L (12'); ML 20; XP 13,000; MM/164, 166 (Golem).

The iron doors are hot to the touch because the lava heats the air in the corridor beyond them (area 32).

32. Bridge.

The corridor leads to a wide bridge spanning a narrow cavern filled with bubbling lava a short distance below. The air is very hot and filled with strong, sulfurous fumes.

Beyond the bridge, the corridor continues. A short distance ahead it appears to lead into a large, illuminated chamber.



The bridge is a trap. Anyone walking across the middle of it (see marked area on the map) will fall through a trapdoor into the lava 30' below. The lava inflicts 20d6 hp damage per round and may require a saving throw to avoid death from massive damage. All items worn must roll saving throws against magical fire; those that fail the throw either melt or burst into flames. The trap is deactivated by pulling a concealed lever on the other side of the bridge (area 33). Walking near the edges of the bridge allows anyone to avoid the trap.

The vapors coming from the lava are strong, but not overly toxic.

33. Bronze Doors. A *permanent illusion* obscures the continuation of the corridor north of this chamber.

> A wide flight of stairs leads up to a platform in front of two tall doors of bronze in the west wall of this chamber. On either side of the doors, two large bowls full of a flaming liquid cast their flickering light on engravings of strange and hideous creatures that cover the doors' surfaces.

These doors actually sit in a magical portal into the realm of the Underdark. They bear powerful enchantments that make them immune to all forms of attack. Information-seeking spells (such as *legend lore)* have only a 50% chance of working on them.

The doors were created long ago by the dwarves to block the portal, after they had defeated the duergar. Only the ancient dwarves understood the intricate locking mechanisms of the doors, knowledge now lost. No thief can pick the door locks, and since the doors are completely impervious to magic, the only remaining means of opening them is through the use of brute force (requiring a Strength of 25).

Anyone closely inspecting the area around the *permanent illusion* spell has a chance (equal to the chance of finding secret doors) of noticing traces of wide wheel tracks heading into the illusory wall. These were created by the cart in area 36.

34. Iron Doors. Two iron doors sit at the end of the corridor. A riddle in the duergar tongue is inscribed across the doors:

> Of fire am I released, of fire am I formed.
> Of fire am I purified, of fire am I consumed.
> I make kings of slaves and slaves of kings.
> My name is strength.
> My name is power.
> What am I?

Anyone who can read dwarvish can read the inscription, as might thieves who succeed with a *read languages* check.

To open the doors requires giving the right answer, steel (iron might also be good enough, at the DM's discretion), in duergar or dwarvish. The doors can also be opened using force, at normal chances for a magically held door, or magic (such as by a *knock* spell).

35. Golem Factory.

> Behind the doors is a vast room cluttered with machinery and other equipment. The air is extremely hot and dry. The west part of the room opens onto a large cavern filled with bubbling lava. By the edge of the pool sits an enormous cauldron of stone or clay, glowing red with heat.
>
> The floor near the cauldron is indented with what appears to be a giant-shaped casting mold.

Two **iron golems** (hp 80 each; see area 31 for complete statistics) stand hidden among the machinery. They attack as the PCs enter the room.

The doors to the storage room (area 36) are locked (normal chances to pick or force open).

36. Storage Room. The walls of this room are lined with crates, boxes, and barrels of all shapes and sizes. Many are empty, but some still contain goods such as iron ingots, chemicals, oil, sand, carbon, grease, fine clay, tools, water in large quantities, etc. Several barrels hold what appears to be blood (from pigs). One half-empty crate holds bars of gold equivalent to 400,000 gp. Several smaller boxes contain thousands of gems: 5,000 gp (×3), 1,000 gp (×31), 500 gp (×113), 100 gp (×517), 50 gp (×898), 10 gp (×2,211). This is truly a king's ransom, but most of it belongs to the people of the southern kingdoms.

At the center of the room is a wide cart, designed to be pulled from area 31, where objects can be loaded onto it using the crane at the top of the staircase (area 29).

The doors leading to area 37 are locked and barred from the opposite side.

37. Iron Warrior. The DM must be familiar with the personalities and motivations of all NPCs in this area before running this encounter. Special attention must also be paid to the "Sequence of Events" on page 71.

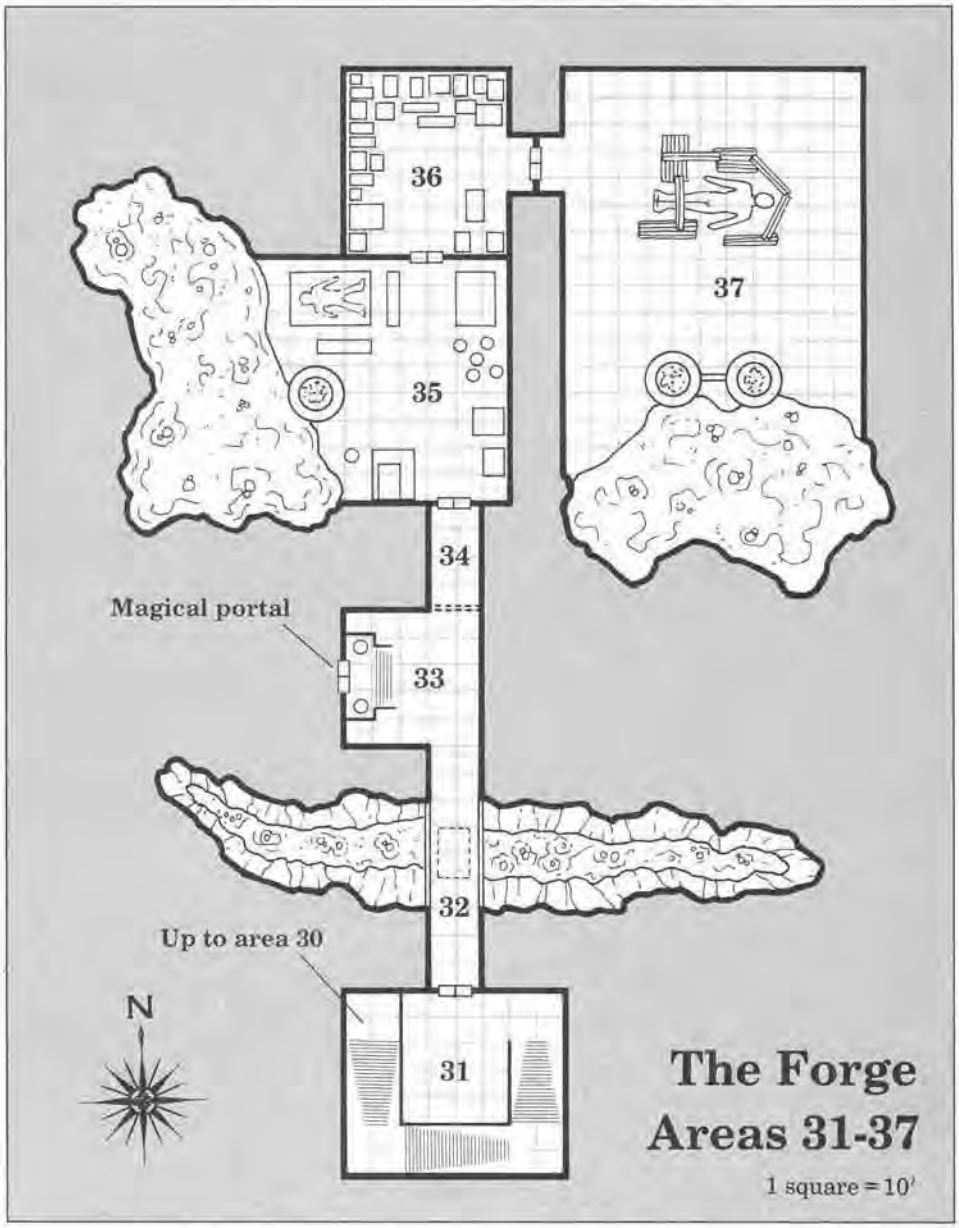
Ulvmard and the duergar engineers have desperately been working on the iron warrior to complete it before the PCs arrive. One of the warrior's arms is still not attached, but it is otherwise ready for the *iron orb* to be inserted into its head.

Ulvmard has taken a few precautions in case the PCs arrive before the iron warrior is activated. His henchmen captured Anja (his daughter) soon after the PCs left Tallborg. They also captured Ragnar on his way back to the city. Ulvmard brought the two to this chamber (using the *teleportation* powers of the *iron orb*; see the sidebar). Anja is being held by one of Ulvmard's guards. Ragnar sits in a cage suspended above one of the smelting cauldrons in the

south section of the room. An iron golem holds the end of the wire attached to the cage. Nilglot, the duergar high priest, stands beside Ulvmard at the iron warrior's head, accompanied by the priest's two guards.

Read the following description when the PCs first enter the room.

> You enter an immense room aglow with fiery red light coming from a lava pool that fills an adjoining cavern to the south. Facing you straight ahead are the soles of two feet, nearly 10' high, belonging to a gigantic golem of polished metal lying on the floor and stretching out away from you to the east. The golem is surrounded by a frame of metal and wood scaffolding. Several duergar scurry about on the scaffolding, obviously in a hurry to escape your presence.
>
> Two large stone cauldrons, similar in appearance to the one you saw earlier [in area 35], sit by the edge of the lava pool. A cage holding what appears to be a man hangs suspended by a wire that runs through a pulley in the ceiling above one of the cauldrons. An iron golem holds the other end of the wire.
>
> Five Northmen warriors are ranged in front of the golem with their weapons drawn. One of them is holding a woman you recognize from Tallborg: Anja.
>
> From somewhere farther inside the room, hidden from view by the scaffolding, you hear a man's voice cry out, "You said they wouldn't get this far. Why are they here, then? I don't know. Hurry up, you lazy scum! When do we kill them? Why are they trying to stop me?"
>
> As the man speaks, another group of seven Northmen warriors steps into view around the north side of the scaffolding.



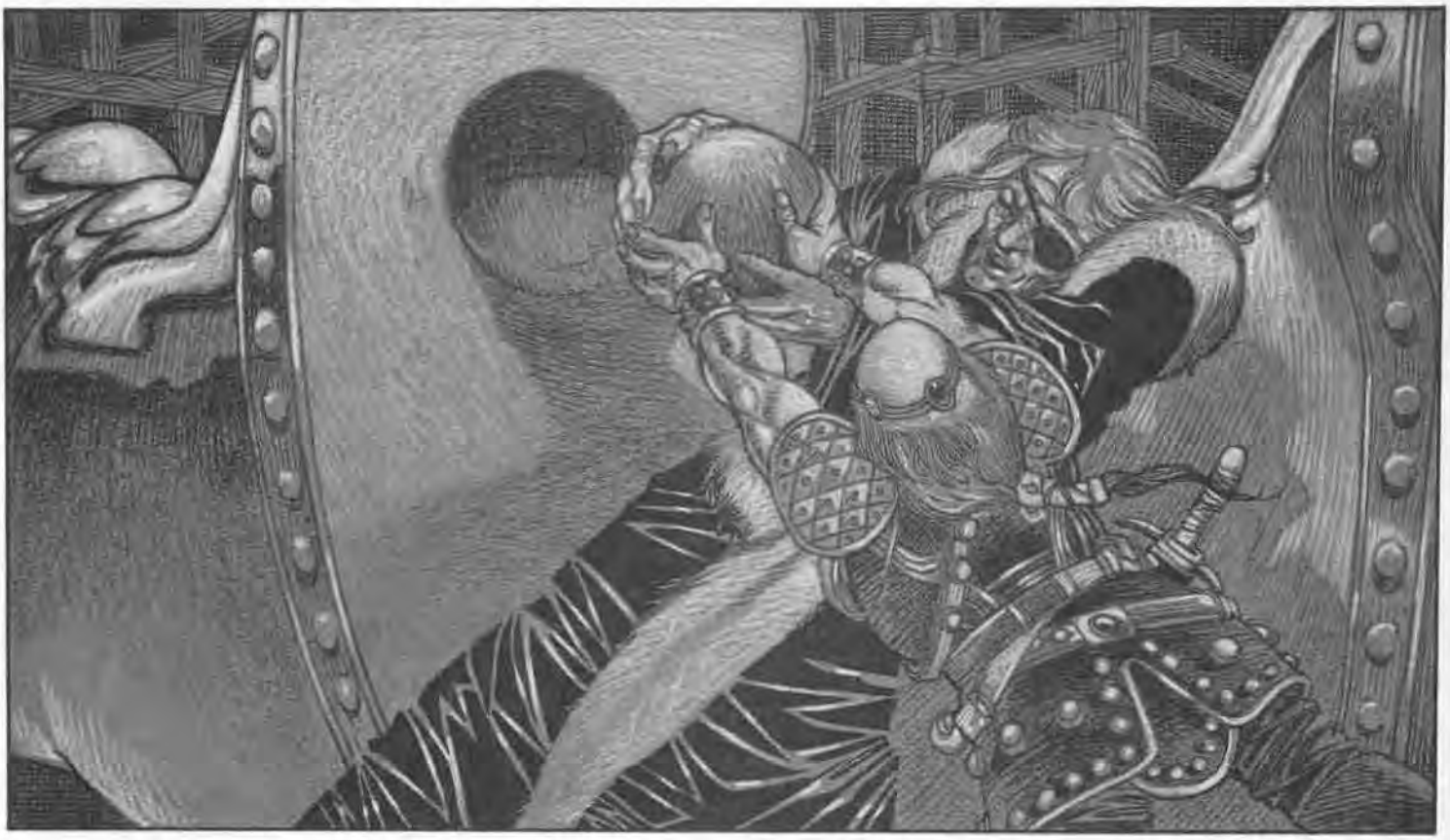
The voice the PCs hear is Ulvmard's. He is shouting out loud to himself, arguing with the *iron orb* floating above his head.

When the PCs first enter the room, Ragnar calls out to them from his cage to let them know he is sitting in it. When she hears Ragnar's voice, Anja cries, "Be careful! The iron man will release Ragnar's cage if you attack." The **iron golem** (hp 80) has orders to release the cage on Ulvmard's command, or if the Northman king is attacked. It will also release the cage to defend itself if it is attacked.

> Ulvmard steps into view near Anja and the Northman warriors, accompanied by a regally dressed duergar [Nilglot, as he appears in area 21] and his two guards. Ulvmard's face is flushed and twisted in anger as he yells, "You fools! Always meddling where you don't belong. This is a matter between the treacherous dwarven race and the noble duergar. You were not invited! Must I destroy you too?
>
> "The life of your friend Ragnar is in your hands. Attack me and he dies."

After he has finished speaking, Ulvmard turns around to head back to the iron warrior. Suddenly Anja shouts (in Common so her guards cannot understand):

> "You must take the orb when my father removes it from above his head to place it in the iron warrior. That is our only chance. But please, don't hurt him."
>
> One of the warriors gives Anja a slap



to silence her. When she lets out a shriek of pain, Ulvmard spins around and a pale gray ray shoots out from the *iron orb*, hitting the warrior and instantly *disintegrating* him.

"Do not harm her!" Ulvmard yells, and turns back toward the iron warrior while talking to himself. "Why did you do that, you fool! What a waste! I'm sorry. Is there nothing to eat here?"

Ulvmard: AL LE (CG without *orb*); AC 3; MV 12; C17; hp 66; THAC0 10; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SA *iron orb of the duergar* (see sidebar) provides *invisibility* at will, *enlarge/reduce* at will (at 20th level); SD *orb* gives +4 on all saving throws vs. spells, immunity to paralysis, poison, all mind-affecting spells, and *illusion/phantasm* spells; MR 30%; S 18/00 (16), D 15, C 15, I 17, W 18, Ch 18; *bracers of defense AC4, long sword +4, dagger +2.*

Ulvmard has no priest spells memorized. He is currently in disfavor with Odin, and the constant battle of wills with the *orb* makes it impossible for him to rest to regain spells. The *iron orb* provides Ulvmard with powers equivalent to those of a duergar and a beholder. (See sidebar for details.) He can use any one function of the *orb* per round (in addition to its *anti-magic ray*).

The only way the *orb* can be removed from above Ulvmard's head is if he removes it himself; if he becomes unconscious (through spells or by being reduced to 0 hp); or if a dwarf, gnome, or duergar successfully overcomes the *orb*'s magical attachment while attempting to physically grab it (20% chance per attempt, only one attempt per round is possible; the person must first reach the *orb*, of course). Eventually, Ulvmard removes the *orb* himself to put it into the iron warrior (see "Sequence of Events").

Nilglot (duergar high priest): INT exceptional; AL LE; AC 2; MV 6; C9/T9; hp 32; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; SA stealth gives −2 on opponent's surprise die roll; become *invisible* and *enlarge/reduce* at will (20th level); backstab for quadruple damage; SD +4 on all saves vs. spells; immune to paralysis, poison, and all illusion/phantasm spells; SZ S (M-L); ML 17; XP 6,000; plate mail, shield, mace, dagger.

Spells: *bless, cure light wounds, darkness, detect magic; heat metal, hold person, know alignment, silence 15' radius; dispel magic, meld into stone, protection from fire* (previously cast); *cure serious wounds, free action; flame strike.*

Nilglot can understand Common. He is currently more concerned about Ulvmard and his erratic behavior than he is worried about the PCs. If the PCs attempt to attack Nilglot, he becomes *invisible* but is ready to grab the *orb* in case Ulvmard is struck down or falls unconscious. Nilglot is guarded by two **duergar lieutenants** (hp 30, 29).

The 20 **duergar technicians** (hp 7 each) are reluctant to fight the PCs, preferring to turn *invisible* and stay out of the way instead.

Elite Northman warriors (12 initially): AL CN; AC 3; MV 9; F5; hp 39 (×2), 36, 34, 32, 30, 29, 28, 27, 26, 25, 20; THAC0 16; #AT 1 (3/2 with long sword); Dmg by weapon type; S 17 (+1, +1), D 15; ML 16; XP 420; chain mail, shield, long sword (specialized), dagger.

The warriors are loyal to Ulvmard. They will prevent the PCs from approaching him, and will defend him if he is attacked.

Sequence of Events

If the PCs allied with Remy, the drow elves appear behind the party at this time. Remy offers to levitate the cage holding Ragnar while the other drow prepare to sneak into the room as soon as the PCs attack, or create some form of diversion to distract the Northmen warriors. The drow focus their efforts on the Northmen warriors, beginning with those to the north of the scaffolding.

If the PCs were hostile to the drow, but did not kill them, the dark elves appear in the room later, when a battle is already under way. In this case, Remy is more concerned about securing the *iron orb* from Ulvmard than helping the PCs survive. She might try to assist Anja, but the drow will not hesitate to kill (or otherwise neutralize) any PCs who get in their way. If the PCs attempt a reconciliation with the drow, Remy might let bygones be bygones, weighing PC-inflicted drow casualties against how nicely they ask and how well they grovel.

The PCs have two rounds to prepare before Ulvmard puts the *iron orb* into the head of the iron warrior. If the high priest has not been attacked by the beginning of the third round, read the following:

> Standing near the head of the iron warrior, Ulvmard removes the *orb* from above his head. With the *orb* in his hands he suddenly seems to hesitate. Tears well up in his eyes.
>
> The duergar leader starts screaming something in the duergar tongue to Ulvmard. Anja begs him to stop what he is doing, for her sake.

This is the PCs' best opportunity to grab the *orb* if they can get to Ulvmard quickly (and knock Nilglot out of the way).

Ulvmard is no longer under the direct influence of the *orb*. He realizes, however, that if he puts it into his creation, the iron warrior most certainly will never let him take it back.

Nilglot waits one round for Ulvmard to continue, before *enlarging* himself and attacking Ulvmard to take the *orb*. (Ulvmard has 18/00 Strength and does his best to resist Nilglot.) The iron golem holding the wire to Ragnar's cage releases the wire as soon as Ulvmard is attacked. The Northmen warriors also come to Ulvmard's rescue, by attacking Nilglot's guards. The drow, if present, attack the Northmen warriors.

Anja still has her spells memorized (see "Ragnar's House") and uses them against suitable targets. The warriors do not hurt her; they fear being disintegrated like their comrade.

If the PCs fail to prevent Ulvmard or Nilglot from putting the *orb* into the iron warrior, it will come to life. The best thing the PCs can do then is to flee as quickly as possible.

Iron warrior: INT genius; AL LE; AC −3; MV 9; HD 36; hp 160; THAC0 −15; #AT 1 (2); Dmg 4d10(/4d10); SA poison cloud every other round, all *orb* abilities; SD all *orb* abilities, iron golem spell immunity, +5 weapons to hit; MR 30%; SZ G; ML 20; XP 36,000.

Once animated, the warrior seeks to destroy everyone in the room except the duergar. The numbers in parentheses indicate the golem's additional attack when it has both arms attached.

Once placed in the warrior, the *orb* cannot be removed from its housing except through powerful magic such as a *wand of negation*, *Mordenkainen's disjunction*, or a *wish* spell. *Dispel magic*, *limited wish*, or *knock* spells are not sufficient. Even if it is successfully struck by a *rod of cancellation*, the *orb* saves with a 3. If the *orb* fails its save, it falls out of place but is not destroyed. If the *orb* is removed, the warrior immediately stops moving.

The *iron orb* cannot control a PC who takes it from Ulvmard unless the PC tries to use the *orb*'s powers. The PC must put the *orb* above his head or concentrate on communicating with it while holding it in his hands. See "The *Iron Orb*" sidebar for details.

Concluding the Adventure

If the PCs gain the *iron orb*, they have saved the day and should be awarded a story award of 250,000 XP. Without the *orb*, the iron warrior is nothing more than scrap metal.

To complete the adventure, the PCs must successfully take the *orb* out of the mine. This may require dealing with monsters or NPCs that the adventurers avoided on the way down. The surviving duergar make a last attempt to stop the PCs before they can leave the fortress.

Ulvmard will be in a state of withdrawal for some time. He has a difficult time ahead as he learns to live without the *orb*. His presence beside the PCs on their way out is enough to prevent any trouble from Northman guards.

If the PCs released the slaves in the upper areas of the mine, they may need to protect Ulvmard from his former prisoners. The slaves have rounded up or killed all the guards they could lay their hands on.

The slaves all beg the PCs to help them get back to their homes in the southern kingdoms as soon as possible. They insist on following the party out of the mine, to Tallborg, stumbling through the snow and huddling together against the cold.

The PCs must figure out what to do with the *iron orb*. If Remy is with the group, she insists it be taken to the dwarves to be destroyed. Anja agrees, and gives Remy her word of honor that this will be done.

If the PCs allied themselves with Remy, they now have a drow elf friend. If the drow elves played a significant role in the final battle (by saving Ragnar, for instance), Remy might claim a favor from the PCs at some future date. Anja also feels indebted to Remy, so the Northmen may come to the aid of the drow, or side with the drow, in a future conflict.

Once the group reaches Tallborg (the drow travel on their own once darkness falls), Anja and Ragnar take command of the city with the help of their fellow resistance members. They order the immediate release of all remaining slaves, and eloquent PCs may convince them to return most of the property stolen from the southern kingdoms. Anja may ask the PCs to stick around a while to help enforce her decrees.

Bringing the *orb* to the dwarves, and ensuring its eventual destruction, might not turn out to be such a simple matter. (See "The *Iron Orb*" sidebar.) The dwarves might ask the PCs to assist them, which could mean undertaking a new adventure in the depths of the earth, or in the Arctic North. Ω

BE A GOOD NEIGHBOR
Volunteer.
American Heart Association